

The defence of LENINGRAD

It is unprecedented for a city of millions to resist a siege and blockade of such intensity as Leningrad endured. But the birthplace of modern Russia has an unbroken tradition of invincibility, and its defence has been a triumph for the civilian population. In spite of savage bombing and shelling, on starvation rations, without heat or light in their homes, they themselves produced the weapons to beat off the enemy assaults. This miracle of fortitude and organisation is described by people who lived in the city throughout its ordeal, notably by Nikolai Tikhonov, famous Soviet author and poet, and a native of Leningrad, whose writing reflects the spirit of resistance in all its moods—its individual heroism and epic grandeur.

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LONDON : NEW YORK : MELBOURNE

£38

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LENINGRAD



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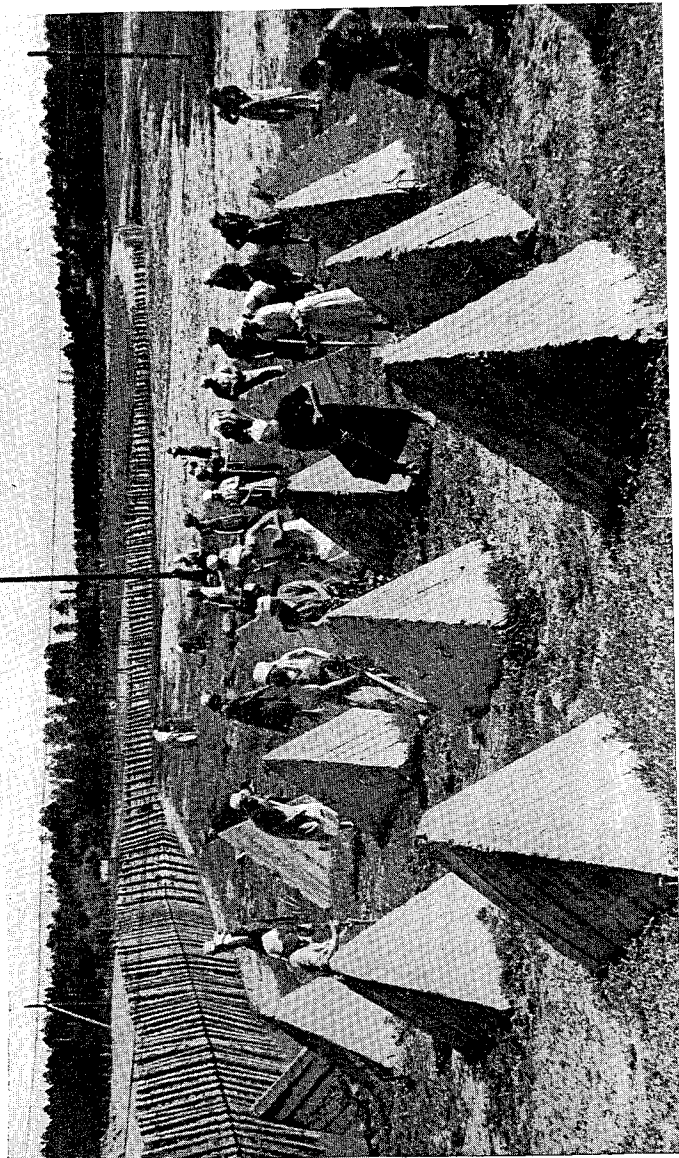
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BY FISHER KNIGHT & CO., LTD.

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BESIEGED

TO ALL WORKERS OF THE CITY OF LENINGRAD

A proclamation by Leningrad Defence Chiefs and Soviet and Party Leaders

COMRADES of Leningrad, dear friends !

Our beloved native city is threatened with the direct assault of the German Fascist armies. The enemy is trying to force his way into Leningrad. He wants to destroy our homes, seize our factories and workshops, loot the people's property, flood the streets and squares with innocent blood. He would degrade the peaceful inhabitants and enslave the free people of our country. But that shall never be ! Leningrad, the cradle of the proletarian revolution, the industrial and cultural centre of our country, has never been and will never be held by an enemy. We have not given our lives and labour to our beautiful city, and built its mighty factories with our own hands, for it to fall into the clutches of the German Fascist robbers.

That shall never be ! This is not the first time that the people of Leningrad have been called upon to resist an invader, and this time, too, the cunning schemes of the enemy will fail. The Red Army is bravely defending the approaches to the city; the Navy and the Air Force are repelling and defeating the enemy's attacks. Nevertheless, he is not yet broken, his resources have not yet been exhausted, nor has he abandoned his piratical designs on our city.

So that we may not be taken unawares, we must realise the enemy's intentions and set against them our determination to defend Leningrad, our freedom, our children and our homes.

The people of Leningrad in their thousands are bravely fighting at the front. We appeal to them to be exemplary soldiers of the Red Army. We say to them: 'Be firm ! Rally our fighting comrades by your example ! Foster in them the spirit of fearlessness, courage and devotion to the fatherland !'

To help the Red Army in action let us form new detachments of the People's Militia, who will be ready to defend Leningrad with weapons in their hands. Let us draft into these detachments our best forces, the boldest and bravest of our comrades—workers, office staffs and intellectuals. The detachments of the People's Militia must immediately set about mastering the business of warfare, and quickly

learn to use a rifle, machine-gun and grenades, and prepare themselves to defend the city.

All the workers of Leningrad must do their utmost to support the detachments of the People's Militia.

Young men, join the ranks of the detachments of the People's Militia!

People of Leningrad, the Red Army looks to you for more and more equipment. It is the first task of all who are forging our victory at the lathes, in the factories and workshops to ensure that the soldiers at the front are amply provided with armaments and munitions.

Workers, engineers and technicians of Leningrad, strengthen the defence of your native country and of your native city with even greater self-sacrifice. Work on production unremittingly, with a thorough realization of the urgency of the moment. Increase the production of equipment and munitions for the front, comrades of Leningrad!

The malignant, dastardly enemy does not hesitate, in his fanatical hatred of our country and people, either to bomb peaceful cities or to shoot women and children. The Hitlerite bandits are preparing to use even more abominable means, such as poison gas. Let us make all the necessary preparations for the anti-aircraft and anti-gas defence of the city. Let us check up time after time whether everything possible has been done by each one of us, by each works and each institution, in the way of anti-aircraft and anti-gas defence. There must not be a single inhabitant of Leningrad who is unable to use the means of defence against aircraft and gas.

Comrades, the enemy is cruel and ruthless. There is no limit to his crimes. By organization, fortitude, valour and the merciless extermination of the Fascist murderers we can and must put a stop to the bloody slaughter of Soviet people by the Germans, and ward off the terrible danger that is threatening our city.

Let us rise like one in defence of our city, our homes, our families, our honour and freedom. Let us fulfil our sacred duty as Soviet patriots and let us be unswerving in the struggle against the ferocious enemy. Let us be vigilant and ruthless in dealing with cowards, panic-mongers and deserters. Let us establish the strictest revolutionary order in our city. Armed with iron discipline and Soviet organization, let us meet the enemy with courage and inflict on him a shattering defeat.

The Leningrad City Soviet of Workers' Deputies and the City Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) are firmly convinced that the Leningrad workers and all working people of the city of Leningrad will fulfil with honour their duty to the fatherland, will not allow the enemy to take them unawares, will devote all their energies to the task of defending Leningrad and, faithful to their

glorious revolutionary traditions, will utterly smash the insolent and reckless enemy.

Let us be steadfast to the end, not sparing our lives. Let us grapple with the enemy, smash and annihilate him!

Death to the German Fascist bandits!

Victory will be ours!

Commander-in-Chief: Marshal K. VOROSHILOV.

Secretary of the Leningrad City Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks): A. ZHDANOV.

President of the Executive Committee of the Leningrad City Soviet of Workers' Deputies: P. POPKOV.

AT THE APPROACHES TO LENINGRAD

By Vissarion Sayanov

TWENTY-TWO years ago in a quiet little street beyond the Narvskaya Zastava, on the outskirts of Leningrad, I heard the roar of artillery fire. It was the thunder of the guns of the White Guard Army that was advancing on the city, some of whose detachments had even then reached the outskirts. From the roofs of the buildings in the suburbs the enemy could see the outlines of St. Isaac's Cathedral through the drifting mist of the late northern autumn. When Yudenitch, Commander-in-Chief of the White Army, was asked to take a look at the buildings of the capital through a pair of field-glasses, the self-satisfied General contemptuously waved them aside. "Why look at the place with glasses, when I shall soon see it well enough with the naked eye?" he said.

A piercing wind was blowing over the Neva, and the storm signals were up in the Gulf of Finland. Patrols were stationed on the bridges. In the damp gloomy lecture-rooms in the old buildings of the University the professors were giving their lectures to the new students. Many of them began their courses with the story of Petrograd, its history, its architecture, its place in the development of Russian culture. I remember how at the time a small detachment of young people was passing down Galernaya Street. Wearing civilian caps and army greatcoats, the young lads marched solemnly along the rough cobbled street, and the band did its best to play a rousing soldier's song, which carried them along as they passed under the arch towards the immense sunset that was flaming over the sombre Neva. All my life I shall remember the faces of those young fighters—they were grave and

stern, with an expression we do not associate with youth. It was the expression of a whole generation, who with self-sacrificing devotion gave up their lives for a great victory. Many years have passed since that time. The names of the old suburbs, Gatchina, Detskoye Selo, Yamburg, are scattered throughout the pages of books on the history of war. During the manœuvres beyond Ropsha ten years ago I found the fragment of a shell in the park with the old oaks. It was a reminder of the battles for Petrograd and of our former victory.

The approaches to Leningrad have once again become battlefields. In quiet hamlets, in forest glades and on the banks of the broad slow rivers the batteries have taken up their firing positions and machine-guns are concealed. Once again the enemy is attacking our city.

The Soviet forces have dealt a severe setback to the savage hordes who are striving to reach Leningrad. Hitler has reduced Germany to beggary and impoverished the Germans, so he is deluding his soldiers with promises of the easy booty they will find in Leningrad. Death is the only booty they will get, and thousands of them have already found it on the outskirts.

The name of Colonel Bondarev is held in affection by the people of Leningrad. On the first day of the battles near the city, Bon 'arev's men routed the crack German units. And day by day they are resisting the onslaught of the enemy and continually adding to the glory of Russia and the Red Army.

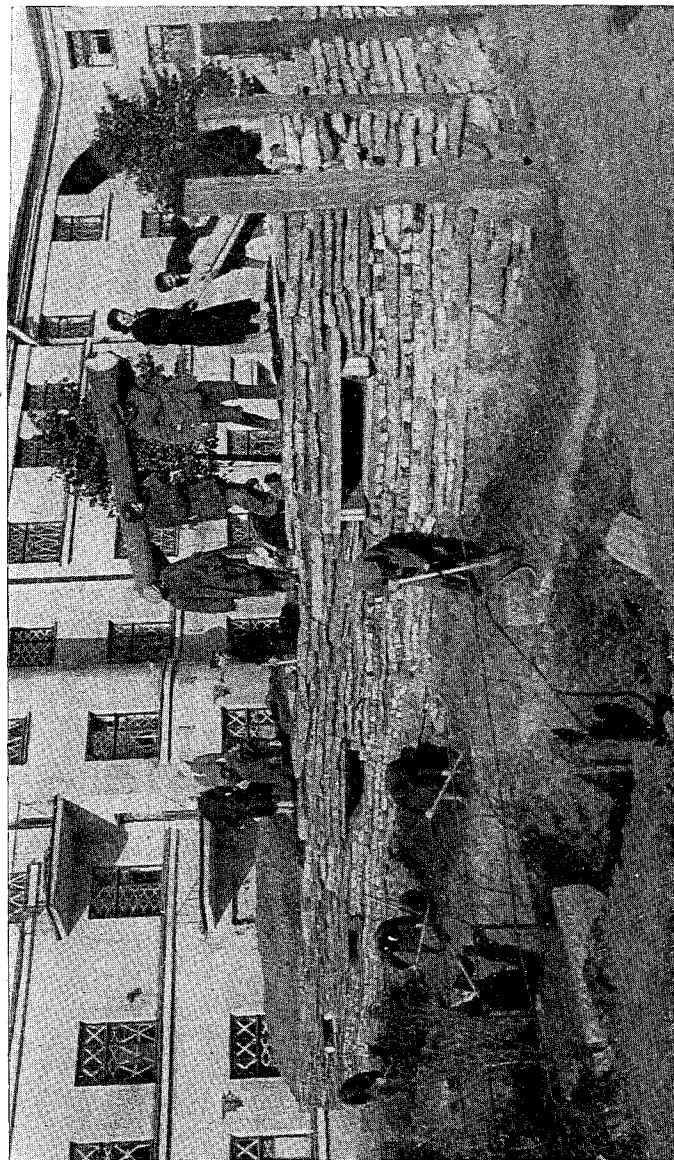
"Who is this Bondarev?" I asked a boy, who was running across a street on the outskirts.

"Our defender," he answered, his dry eyes gleaming with envy of the man whose good fortune it was to defend our great city.

Hundreds of commanders and political workers and thousands of fighters are emulating Bondarev's example.

More and more enemy aircraft are being shot down at the approaches to Leningrad. Competing with the fighter pilots, the anti-aircraft men take a mounting toll of the enemy's machines. Shaliganov, the Commissar of the Nth Squadron, has an old account with the Germans: he fought them over the olive groves of Spain. Recently he went up and boldly shot down a couple of their fighters over the suburbs.

Intellectuals and clerks, workers and professional soldiers, are all inspired with the same enthusiasm, united in a single purpose. They are not yielding a single step in these stern battles. Captain Krasnov, Hero of the Soviet Union, is one of the boldest leaders in the struggle against the German barbarians, and annihilated a crack unit of the S.S. in the fighting near S. The German Command was furious, and demanded that Krasnov should be taken alive and sent to Berlin. Punishment of a different sort was reserved for Onkin, the Commissar



Building Street Defences



Workers' Detachment on the March

of Krasnov's unit—orders were given that he was to be captured and cut up into four pieces.

It is a peculiar characteristic of the Fascist butchers that they mistake their wishes for reality. They hurriedly started the rumour that the orders of the German Command had been carried out and that Krasnov was captured. But this only happened in the imagination of the Fascist pen-pushers. Krasnov and Onkin are alive. They are leading their units into battle and knocking out the Fascist soldiers and officers.

Side by side with the regular units of the Red Army, the soldiers of the People's Militia are fighting bravely. I shall always remember one of them—an old bearded man, who has taken part in three wars. He received his baptism of fire in the German war a quarter of a century ago. Now, having sent his sons to the front, he has taken up his gun again.

"We've got to make an end of Fascism once and for all," he said sternly. "We can't allow the mad rulers of Germany to turn Europe into a graveyard. They poisoned my youth, and now they want to poison the youth of my sons and destroy my grandchildren with bombs and shells. They're not going to do it!"

The approaches to Leningrad have become a shambles in which German regiments and divisions are being ground to pieces.

The Fascist louts shall never swagger along our streets!

Victorious Russian troops once occupied Berlin, the capital of Germany, and the keys of Berlin are still kept in our country, but no conquerors have ever entered our city: the enemy has never been able to break through into Leningrad. The enemy perished at the approaches to Petrograd without having gained the victory. And they will perish at the approaches to Leningrad. Our city has borne three names, each of which stands for a glorious epoch, and not one of them has been dishonoured by defeat!

Hordes of greedy savages, like bands of Huns, are pitting themselves against one of the bulwarks of world culture. They want to destroy it and to wipe out the very memory of Russian glory. All the world knows that this invasion of the barbarians is a menace to the culture of the world, to which our city has contributed so much. In this city were created Pushkin's verses and Mendeleyev's periodic system, Pavlov's physiological theories, Chaikovsky's operas, Gogol's stories and many other things which have become the treasures of all mankind. From a quiet house on the ancient quay, Kutuzov went to take over the command of the armies which destroyed Napoleon in 1812.

The bloody maniac Hitler—the upstart with a tooth-brush moustache and the hoarse voice of an executioner—is leading millions of



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The bloody maniac Hitler—the upstart with a tooth-brush moustache and the hoarse voice of an executioner—is leading millions of

Germans to the slaughter. He dreams of victory. Leningrad stands, a stronghold of the fatherland, and woe to him who dares to lay hands on this sacred possession of the Soviet people!

THE PEOPLE'S MILITIA

By Sergei Ivanov

FROM the first day of the Patriotic War, regiments and divisions of the People's Militia were formed in the city. Workers, engineers, artists, book-keepers, students and writers, all sons and daughters of Leningrad have been undergoing military training day and night. And now they are putting it to the test in the heroic battles for their city. They are fighting side by side with the regular units of the Red Army, and old, experienced commanders declare: "We have received splendid reinforcements!"

Take the case of Sergeant Anatoly Yozhikov. In 1918 his native village in the Ukraine was invaded by the Germans. They set fire to the houses and killed the peasants. They shot his father. Now he is fighting in the regular units at Leningrad. "I'll defend Lenin's city to the last drop of my blood," he declares. "This is my righteous revenge for my father's murder. Lenin's city is my city!"

Fighting side by side with him is Trofimov, a laboratory assistant at a factory and commander of a section of the People's Militia. The section was surrounded by the Germans. Trofimov grasped the situation, showed the men where they had to break through the encirclement, and himself lay down behind the machine-gun. His fire gave the necessary cover for the detachment to get out of the trap.

Piotrovski, a Stakhanovite moulder in one of the Leningrad factories, is not a young man. On his chest he wears the Order of the Red Banner, which he was awarded for bravery during the civil war. Now he is defending his native Leningrad together with the young men. His squad was given the difficult task of capturing a height where the enemy was strongly entrenched. The Fascists outnumbered the attackers, but the height was captured nonetheless, and it was Piotrovski, the elderly worker, who as commander of the machine-gun squad, led his men in the daring assault.

The exploit of Pyankov, assistant section-commander in the People's Militia, is the talk of all the other sections in his unit. This intrepid commander crept up to the Fascists' trenches and pasted them with grenades until he was riddled with bullets.

Communist Selentor, a machine-gunner, repaired a comrade's

machine-gun under fire. The gun was in action again in double-quick time and its fire settled the fight in our favour.

Mikhail Razmashkin was wounded in the hand during the fighting. He was told he could go to the rear but answered: "I'm going to stay on. I'll make a dozen Fascists pay for this."

The fighters Kaminski and Kuznetsov twice swam across the river to the side which was held by the enemy. They brought back two wounded comrades, who would otherwise have been left to the mercy of the Fascists.

Kudryavtzev, an old machine-gunner, who had taken part in the first world war and the civil war, joined the People's Militia with his two sons and two nephews. Ambulance-nurse Vassilieva went off to the front lines together with her son. Dmitriev, a 53-year-old shop-manager, joined up in the Militia, while his wife and daughter took up hospital work.

The young people of Leningrad are worthy of their fathers. At the approaches to Leningrad the former pupils of the 306th School, where I taught history, are fighting the enemy. We teachers are proud of our pupils. The gunners Piotr Vorobyev, Ivan Vashukov, Nikolai Sobolev, the tankman Alexander Yoffe, the infantryman Nikolai Zaharev, the sapper Sergei Popchenko, are first-rate youngsters. Loving their country and their native city, they are fighting the enemy with the tenacity of veteran soldiers.

Brave girls are also lining up with the young men in the defence of Leningrad. Maya, a young hairdresser, helped to carry up ammunition and behaved with courage and self-sacrifice under fire. Valya Nikiforova, the commander of a group of snipers, fought fearlessly against the enemy.

Women soldiers—students of the Technological Institute—were universally esteemed in their regiment. They stood up to all the hardships of the campaign and rescued wounded men from under fire. They may have got tired, but they never showed it. They are modest, painstaking, efficient girls. The weary soldier takes a look at them, grips his rifle more firmly, lifts up his head and marches on with new strength.

BUILDING DEFENCE LINES

By Nina Mironova

THE battle had been going on for several days. The rumble of artillery fire could be heard in the distance, and as our construction-squad marched nearer to the front, bomb explosions could be distinctly felt. From time to time the sound of furious shouting reached us, as our

soldiers went into the attack. It was here that we were to carry out our work.

We inspected the plans to see that everything was in order, brought up the materials and got down to the job. But work had no sooner begun than a Fascist plane appeared, and immediately a bomb exploded with a deafening roar, sending up clouds of sand and dust.

The workers had to take cover in the forest for a while. Ulanov, the political worker, got together a small group and opened the latest newspaper. Raising his voice so as to be heard above the din, he began to read out episodes of the fighting from the communiqués of the Soviet Information Bureau. The tense faces of his listeners became more calm and resolute; they had a smoke and then went back to their work.

But the Hitlerite ruffians would not leave them alone. Time after time all through the day and night their planes came over and tried to panic the trench-builders. But Soviet people are not made of that sort of stuff! Only when the enemy's fire became too intense was the work interrupted for a short time, and then only on the orders of the military command.

Outwardly everything on the construction line seemed to be like old times. The lads of the FZO¹ schools were hard at work breaking up the ground as though they were passing their examination in productive efficiency. Here, too, were the workers from the timber combine and the maintenance engineers. They were all working as they had done on a peacetime job, and round about stretched river and forest, hills and marshes . . .

Not so very long ago all these people were living and working on the banks of another river, one that was swift and deep. They built a powerful hydro-electric station which occupies an important place among new constructions in Stalin's Third Five-Year Plan. Their job in those days was to build, and now they are building again, only their task is a different one. All that they constructed with their hands in the years of creative work has now to be defended, here on the fighting line, against arrogant aggressors. Their task is to raise a powerful line of fortifications along this border.

They were obliged to work twelve hours on the very first day, and were looking forward to some rest after the strain of the long stretch of heavy digging. But the job was still a long way from completion, and even those who were most exhausted went out on the second shift in order to get it done.

There was no let-up all through the long night, but the people went on with the job so well and briskly one might have thought they had only just come on. As early as six o'clock in the morning, two hours

¹ Technical schools attached to the works and factories.

in advance of schedule, the whole contingent could report that their assignment had been completed.

It was then necessary to switch over at once to a new line eighteen miles away. The column of construction-workers moved off in military formation, squad after squad. Fifteen-hundred men arrived at the new place in perfect order, without a single straggler or case of sickness.

The column was met by the military command on the highroad leading to a sector where our troops were in direct contact with the enemy.

"You must not go into the village or light camp-fires," was the order given us.

The men went in silence into the forest. They were shown where the defence system was to be constructed and were asked how long it would take. Experience had shown that it would normally take a couple of days at least to finish the job. But our fighters of the Red Army needed trenches, so the men resolved to do everything, even the impossible.

In front lay the Red Army men on the actual firing line, while behind the workers stood the Russian artillery. The guns were at it without a pause and the night sky was lit up with the flashes of the explosions. But the digging went on uninterruptedly, and seven hours later, at four o'clock in the morning, the commander of the troops gave a hearty send-off to the men who had given him such vital help in the battle. The line was ready.

If a notice-board like the one that used to be hung up on the hydro-electric station job had been available whilst the defence lines were being made, its contents would have been interesting reading, for the different squads had over-fulfilled their quotas by anything from thirty to sixty per cent. And one individual set up a record, having done three times his allocation.

Many people proved their mettle in building the line. The engineer Suharev used to work in an organization that planned industrial buildings. Now he was obliged to deal with the unfamiliar. He was used to the speed of Socialist construction, but the war demanded super-speed. The blue print no sooner leaves the hands of the draughtsman than the army of builders converts it into a material reality. The outstanding talent of engineer Suharev, a former day-labourer and carpenter, finds its parallel in the initiative and skill of thousands of Soviet people.

The carpenters, diggers, concrete workers and machinists are well acquainted with Komarov, who was formerly assistant director of the Timber Combine. As director of the column, he was always on the spot during the work of constructing the line.

One morning, when the men were about to start work, the Nazi

airmen carried out one of their usual murderous attacks. Sixteen bombs were dropped on the work under construction, but only one scored a direct hit. It fell on the very spot where a large excavation was going to be made.

"Couldn't be better!" everybody laughed. "The Germans have dug their own grave."

Working on the construction of powerful defences around Leningrad, in one of the sections of the Vyborg district, is a brigade of lumbermen. They do the heaviest kind of work, felling trees and bringing timber up to the line across the hilly, broken country. They haul huge trunks on their backs. The brigade used to be all men, twelve strong, muscular fellows, and it was very unwillingly that they accepted one woman into their ranks. Nona Morozova was very persistent in asking to be allowed to do this sort of work and tried to persuade them that she could manage it. The lumbermen had their doubts and shook their heads, but finally consented to take her in. They put her on probation for a certain time and when she finished it she became—Nona Morozova, leader of the lumbermen's brigade. And what a wonderful worker she was!

And now her sonorous voice echoes through the forest: "One, two, heave-o!"

And at this command the twelve shame-faced sceptics set about hauling the trees with a right good will.

When Nona Morozova was recently offered a short leave in Leningrad she refused, saying: "I'm more useful here. I won't go away anywhere till the whole job is finished."

At 8.30 in the evening the workers leave the construction line. They take a rest, read the newspapers and have supper. It is a well-deserved break after eleven hours work. Somebody asks: "Where has Nikolai Utkin got to?"

An hour goes by and another, and still there is no sign of him. The men begin to get anxious.

"Where did you see him the last time?" someone asks.

They try to remember.

"Yes, out on the line, near the firing point."

A number of men set out in the direction of the line. On approaching their sector, they hear the sound of an axe. When they reach the spot they discover Nikolai Utkin. Since then everyone in the brigade knows that if Nikolai Utkin is missing, it means he has stayed behind on the line, where he will go on working till midnight.

Utkin suffered a great loss in the very first days of the war. His beloved son Nikolai, a frontier guardsman, was killed, after putting up a heroic defence. The old man is inconsolable and can hardly

bear to talk about it. But he knows that with his self-sacrificing labour he is getting his revenge on the enemy. Everybody can see how quickly the task takes shape when Utkin the carpenter is working on it.

Future historians will be faced with a difficult task in trying to deal with this epoch of mass heroism. How are you going to pick out the names of the best, if the whole people is a hero, all of whom have increased the strength of our resistance to the enemy by their unpretentious, self-sacrificing labour.

IMPATIENCE

By L. Nikolsky

THE son of Larikova, the schoolmistress, came home from the front. He crossed the ice of Lake Ladoga in a lorry reaching Leningrad after dark, so that he drove right up to his home without being able to see anything of the city. Besides, his excitement was so great that he could think of nothing but the meeting with his mother to which he had so long looked forward.

He knocked a long time on the hoar-frosted door of the familiar flat where he had lived since childhood, till at last his mother came out. He saw only her dear, shining grey eyes in the uncertain flickering light of the oil lamp. Remembering those eyes in the trenches, he had often pressed his lips to them in his thoughts. Now it was happening in reality. He kissed her and said only one word: "Mother!"

He woke up late in the morning. His mother had already gone out. He dressed quickly, put on a sheepskin coat and went out into the street. It was grand to be back in Leningrad! Now he, Lieutenant Vladimir Larikov, would go and see the places where he had run about as a lad, where he had made his first date with a girl, where happiness and grief had alternated with the rapidity natural in young people's lives.

He thought he would make a quick tour of the places he liked best so as to be back home in time for his mother's return from school. Although his affection for her was really deep, he was a bit afraid of her, too, for he could not forget that his mother had been his schoolmistress as well. He knew how strict was her sense of justice; she had never shown her only son any favours in school, devoted though she was to him. All his life he would never forget her voice reproving him when he had played the fool one day in her class: "Larikov! If you can't behave yourself, leave the room."

It was already getting dark when the Lieutenant arrived home.

On the festive blue tablecloth in the sitting-room stood a large lamp which had been borrowed from the neighbours. His mother seemed to have been anxious about him.

"I couldn't help it, Mother," he said, as though by way of justification and excuse.

All the evening he was distracted and listless. He felt dissatisfied with himself on that account and tried to be gay, but could only smile in a forced way. Suddenly his mother broke off the conversation and turned down the lamp.

"You're tired from the journey," she murmured.

Larikov went off to bed. He had not slept in his old familiar bed since the beginning of the war. How pleasant were the fresh clean sheets and the eiderdown after the long jolting journey and the plank beds in the dug-outs! But he was unable to sleep. He kept thinking about the day he had spent in the city which he had not seen since the beginning of the war.

On leaving the house in the morning he had almost run to see the old school, but the school was no longer there. Twisted girders and piles of bricks were all that was left of it. Then he had hurried away to look up his old classmate, Andrei Kovalev, suddenly feeling a great desire to see the cheerful face of his closest friend, who was working in a defence factory. Of course, he could not count on finding him at home in the day-time; but the reality was much worse than anything he had expected.

"Yes," they had told him at the house, "Andrei Kovalev did live here a year ago. He died of starvation."

Larikov had then walked down the main streets of his district and gazed in astonishment at the houses that had been torn and shattered by the enemy's bombs, shells and fires.

He had seen the remains of the children's hospital, demolished by blast. A tired-looking woman in a kerchief had offered to show him the way to the communal grave.

"You ought to see it," she had said to him.

At the Haven a row of snow-covered chimneys stood in the place where there had once been wooden houses. The houses themselves had all been torn down for firewood. He had gone along the broad Bolshoy Prospect and noticed with a pang in his heart that not a single quarter nor a single house had escaped damage.

At the front, of course, he had heard a good deal about Leningrad, but it was only now that he saw it with his own eyes.

No, he could not sleep. And without realizing it, he began to talk aloud, rapidly and passionately:

"Mother, how did you manage to stand all this?"

"We had to stand it. We couldn't do anything else."

"But Andrei's dead, Mother."

"The Germans killed him, Volodya."

"Mother, if he'd only asked you for a piece of bread?"

"We had no bread, Volodya. The Germans were starving us to death."

Lieutenant Larikov spent two more days in Leningrad. He saw much that he had failed to see the first day. He saw thousands of gaps and shell-holes in the houses. He observed the calm of the city during the air raids and the shellings. He even went to the skating-rink, but did not skate.

He had been till recently a history student and could not help realizing that something was taking place that was unexampled in world history. Since the time of the siege, after many months of exceptionally heavy privations, the city had not grown weaker, but stronger than before. It had become a city of war. This was evident in everything.

On the Sunday Larikov and his mother had arranged to go to the theatre together, to see the ballet *Esmeralda* at the Comedy. Larikova wanted so much to go through the foyer on the arm of her only son, whom she had brought up alone since his father had died young of consumption. And now her ruddy-cheeked, brave young son would walk with her on his arm, and she would be proud of him. She had been waiting for this during the long nights when the Germans were bombing the city. She had dreamed about it when her back was aching after the heavy work on the defence fortifications. She had already taken out of the trunk her silk evening dress and the black lace shawl.

On Thursday during the long break at the school she was called downstairs.

"A soldier is asking for you," they told her.

Although he had already been over the top several times, Larikov suddenly felt timid as if he were at school again when told to go upstairs to the schoolmistress's room, so he sent his mother a message asking her to come down.

"Don't be angry, Mother," he said. "We shan't be able to go to the theatre. I've got to go away before. I've got to go and tell them at the front all that I've seen here. I've got to let them know what I feel about it. Mother, you were always strict, but you were always absolutely straightforward. Try to understand my impatience. I can't wait any longer."

She knew his stubbornness. It came from his father, who preferred to lose the job on which his livelihood and his family depended rather than apologize to an inspector when he did not consider himself to be in the wrong. She realized that her son resembled his father as a

young man. And besides, however bitter it was for her to admit the fact now, her son, the soldier, was right.

"You understand, Mother!" the young man repeated, not knowing what else to say.

The class bell began to ring. The break was over.

"It's time for me to go back to my class," she replied. "Wait for me here. We'll go home together. I'll help you pack your things." And calling him by the diminutive which she had only used when he was a small child, she added in a trembling voice: "Volodenka!"

The eyes gazing at him were those of a mother and a beloved teacher, grey, stern, yet radiant and young.

A WINTER NIGHT SHIFT

By Nikolai Tikhonov

FROM outside, the workshop walls looked dark and gaunt, like the ice-covered cliffs of an Arctic bay. It seemed as though all life were extinct in this dreary space, with its litter of frozen metal, barrels and slag heaps. Piles of snowdrift rose like frozen waves on all sides. Not a single light gleamed through the darkness of the January night.

If a stranger were brought here and put down in this silent yard, he would say he was in a wilderness of ice miles away from any human dwelling. Yet it was the yard of a giant factory.

And if you found a little door and opened it you would be looking into a place that might have been a cave with stalactites. This was the workshop. The sky showed darkly through the shell-holes in the roof, a gleaming layer of ice covered the rafters and walls, carefully-shaded, dim electric lamps cast patches of light at intervals, and if you stared intently you would see a good number of people in the various sections of the vast hall. They were at work.

They were wrapped up in all sorts of coverings and threw weird shadows in the feeble light. The sharp lines of their sunken faces would have frightened an outsider, but Potiekhin knew everybody there and was used to this fantastic scene known as the night shift.

The cold penetrated even his fur coat. The frozen metal gave out a faint glow as though from red-hot steel covered with a film. All around were little mounds of brown, grey, black and silvery colour. This was the earth for the casting moulds—the "sacred earth of the moulds," as Potiekhin loved to call it loftily, with the jocular solemnity of peace-time.

The preparation of the earth for the moulds had now become quite

a feat, having to be mixed in the requisite proportions in semi-darkness. The casting depended on the correct blending of the various ingredients, the production of the shells depended on the casting, and on the shells depended the defence of the city, whose existence could only be conjectured in the vastness of the dark winter's night.

In the day-time the sound of long-drawn-out shouts floated up to the factory. They came from the front line, where the soldiers were counter-attacking.

Shells were needed day and night. Shells had to be made, even if the North Pole itself came and settled in the factory yard with all its blizzards and mighty frosts.

And the earth of the moulds had also to be prepared. When Potiekhin, the craftsman and constructor, went up to the mounds of earth, a woman was sitting among them bending her head right down and taking a shovelful now from one heap, now from another. Potiekhin stood and watched how she built up a new mound with slow persistence.

She looked up at him and without saying a word glanced in the direction of a plank where a man lay huddled with his arms folded over his breast. Potiekhin thought he was sound asleep. But he suddenly noticed that the shovel in the woman's hand was trembling, and he bent down to her.

"Aunt Pasha," he said, "the old chap is tired. He's worn out."

The woman gave him a stern look at first. Then her face, which was covered with metallic dust, took on a softer look, and she replied after a pause:

"Yes, he's worn out. Don't interfere with him. Let him rest."

"Then it would be better for him to go home, Aunt Pasha. Or hasn't he got the strength? It's a wonder he hasn't frozen to death. It's just like being in the street."

Aunt Pasha made a swift movement and pulled him by the hand so abruptly that Potiekhin was obliged to squat down beside her. Then she thrust her face close up to his, and began to speak, moving her lips that were stiff with the cold: "Tell me, are you a Russian?"

"Of course I am," said Potiekhin. "What's the matter, Aunt Pasha?"

"Well, since you're a Russian, it's all right. You'll understand. I needn't make a long story of it. My man got weak, quite weak, but he still kept on coming and working. 'My heart's in it,' he said to me. 'Come on, Pasha, let's get a move on!' But his hands couldn't work any quicker. And his head was reeling from starvation. 'I feel very bad,' he said. 'Don't say that,' I said to him. 'You'll have to lay off.' 'I won't lay off,' he replied. 'We're making a sort of respon-

sible earth. And you don't know how to mix it properly. You must learn. Repeat everything after me and watch. And watch!"

The woman began to cry. Potiekhin sat squatting on his heels and saw Aunt Pasha wipe away her tears, and how they congealed on her metallic face in bright streaks.

"I repeated my lesson. He kept going over everything and repeating it. 'That's right,' he said. 'Don't forget it.' Then he went and lay down. That's all, my dear," she said, and added with a sob, still keeping her grip on the shovel: "I'm working as he told me."

Potiekhin turned towards the man who was lying down. Aunt Pasha touched him on his coat sleeve.

"My heart's in it," he said. "And my heart's in it too, my son," I said to him: "Sleep, Timofei. You've done your share of work. I'll shovel twice as much earth for you to-day." Look what a lot there is, and it's still not enough. It's not enough for me, and the cold doesn't stop me."

Potiekhin got up and went over to the dead man. He lay with his head and frosted beard inclining on his breast, and his hands were carefully crossed and tied with a string.

"There's nothing I can say to you, Aunt Pasha," said Potiekhin. "You know yourself it's not a question of words."

"Not a question of words," she repeated, manipulating the shovel more and more briskly. "Go and work, my dear. I'll be with him here. I'll carry out my lesson. I won't bungle it. You go, and leave me here alone."

"What was it she said?" thought Potiekhin, as he passed down the wide, cold workshop. 'Responsible earth.' Yes, the old woman had well said it was 'responsible earth'! It was the beloved, 'invincible' earth of Leningrad!

THE LENINGRAD SYMPHONY

By Olga Vergoltz

IN September last year when the Germans were making a furious onslaught on Leningrad, burning, shelling and bombing the city, when the German Command was distributing invitation cards to officers for a great banquet at the 'Astoria,' when the citizens were feverishly digging anti-tank ditches at the approaches to the city and putting up barricades in the main streets, the Leningrad radio broadcast morning, afternoon and evening every day the stern, exciting words: "Listen to us, our native country! This is the city of Lenin calling! This is Leningrad calling. . . ."

Leningrad spoke to the country with the voices of its defenders—the workers, writers, housewives, musicians, Red Army men and sailors.

On the morning of September 16th, 1941, Leningrad spoke to the country through the composer Dmitri Shostakovich.

At the early hour when the Radio Committee's car arrived to fetch him to the studio, he was already seated at his piano.

"I'll come at once," he said, jotting down a few more symbols on the music paper. "This very minute! . . . There you are! Let's go."

Half-way to the studio the car ran into an air-raid warning. The whole country, that was eagerly listening-in to the voice of Leningrad, did not know that in Leningrad Shostakovich was speaking amid the roar of the anti-aircraft guns and the crash of bombs.

"An hour ago I finished the score of my new big symphonic composition," said the composer at the beginning of his talk. "If I succeed in writing this well, and can manage to finish the third and fourth parts, I shall call it the Seventh Symphony."

"Why do I tell you about this? I tell you so that all of you who are now listening to me may know that the life of our city is going on normally. All of us are now doing our part in the fighting. . . . Soviet musicians, my dear and numerous comrades-in-arms, my friends! Remember that a great danger is threatening our art. Let us defend our music, let us work honourably and with self-abnegation. . . ."

The composer spoke in a muffled voice; he was evidently agitated and seemed to be confused.

That morning the leading article of the *Leningrad Pravda* was headed: 'The Enemy is at the Gates.' 'The city is faced with the imminent danger of a penetration by the base and malicious enemy. Leningrad has become the front,' it stated.

Yes, during those days Leningrad became the front, and every citizen, whatever his profession, became a front-line soldier. The members of the Radio Committee Orchestra, the only one remaining in Leningrad, helped to build the defences.

During those days there was no music in Leningrad. Only the dull, even tapping of a metronome came through the loud-speakers for hours at a time. This beat was quickened after the wailing of the sirens, like the faster beating of a sick man's pulse. The metronome quickened its beat most of all in the evenings. In September last year the Germans used to fly over exactly at half-past seven, when the evenings were amazingly clear, dry and transparent. Suffused with bright moonlight, the sky seemed to be made of glass, and the city was as plain to the enemy as though it lay in the palm of his hand. From the moonlit sky he rained down land-mines and incendiaries,

and the population, young and old, though this was their first experience of raids, fought each outbreak of fire. For their part, the musicians of the only orchestra in Leningrad made themselves responsible for their own building. Presser, the violinist, was in charge of the fire brigade; the first incendiary bomb to fall on the Radio Committee building was put out by Yassinyavski, leader of the violas. Though armed with shovels and axes and wearing helmets and fireproof gloves, they did not cease to be musicians.

On September 28th they broadcast a concert to England from the Radio Committee's Studio, giving Chaikovsky's Fifth Symphony. Exactly at half-past seven—the time of the broadcast—the Germans began a raid. Twice the Radio building shook from side to side as two big land mines dropped nearby, and the thunder of the falling bricks could be distinctly heard in the studio. But the musicians knew that the whole world was listening to the voice of Leningrad, nothing that happened outside could make them falter in their playing. When the broadcast was over, the musicians went to their raid stations—in the attic, on the roof and at the main entrance.

Soon after this the city was living in a state of siege. A hard winter set in, and all sorts of hardships had to be faced one after another by the defenders. But the orchestra still went on meeting for rehearsals in the icy studios until the end of December, when a concert was broadcast to Sweden, and that was the last.

In March the exciting news reached Leningrad that Shostakovich's Seventh Symphony had been played in Kuibyshev. Shortly afterwards it was played for the first time in Moscow. Enthusiastic newspaper articles spoke of it as a remarkable work of art. But it was a symphony that belonged to Leningrad, it had been conceived in Leningrad during the city's most critical days, and its young composer first told the public about his composition from the studio of the Leningrad Radio Committee.

That evening all the musicians attended a meeting at the Radio Committee building. There were very few of them, only fifteen altogether. Some of the others had already joined the forces defending the city, some were sick and some, unable to stand the rigours of the winter siege, had died. But these fifteen men, with the Art Director of the Radio Committee—fifteen hardened combatants of the civil defence, qualified musicians, who had gone through all the hardships of the siege—these fifteen men decided that Leningrad's own Symphony must be performed in Leningrad whatever happened.

But fifteen men are not an orchestra, so it was decided to announce the compulsory registration of all the city's musicians. In conjunction with the Directorate of Fine Arts, the Radio Committee began to revive the orchestra and to bring together all the musicians who remained.

The united city orchestra was joined by Sazietnovski, conductor of the Philharmonic orchestra, and the septuagenarian French-horn player Nagorniuk, the oldest musician in Leningrad. He had in his life played in three orchestras under the conductorship of Chaikovsky, Napravnik and Glazunov. Nagorniuk's son, a Red Army man who had been discharged after being severely wounded on the Leningrad front, was about to leave Leningrad and asked his father to go with him. But the old musician stayed on in the city in order to take part in the performance of the Seventh Symphony.

The orchestra began to work in the Radio Committee's studios, which had been warmed up a little. But until the score of the Seventh Symphony was received from Moscow they rehearsed other music, choosing lighter things to begin with, as they had grown very weak over the winter.

Then on April 5th, 1942, a symphonic concert—the first concert in Leningrad after the rigours of the winter months—was performed.

The enormous hall of the Pushkin Theatre was full. The people of Leningrad came to the concert still dressed in their padded winter coats and not fully awake after the winter. The streets had only just been cleaned up—the last great battle of the exhausted people with the ice of winter. The curtain went up and the audience saw the musicians sitting on the stage. They were not wearing padded winter coats, but were in dress suits! They held their instruments in their hands with great care. Then Eliasberg, the conductor, came on, looking thin like all the others, but wearing evening dress. He was strict, his movements were imperious, and his smallest gesture revealed the inflexible will of a musician, and man, who had grown in spiritual stature during these months of life in the front line.

A little later the score of the Seventh Symphony arrived.

Karl Eliasberg turned over the pages with eager hands, and he realized at once that as things were it would be impossible to perform the Leningrad Symphony in Leningrad: it required a double-sized orchestra, at least a hundred musicians, and it was now impossible to find so many.

But the Seventh Symphony had got to be performed in the city of its birth. The whole of Leningrad with its army and navy was at one in the determination that this should be done. At the suggestion of the Political Directorate of the Front and Fleet the best musicians of the army and navy orchestras were attached to the Radio Committee's orchestra. When all the necessary musicians arrived in the city straight from the front, the orchestra began the rehearsals.

Leningrad's orchestra rehearsed with enthusiasm and devotion the city's own symphony, a work of world-wide significance born in the city they were defending from a ferocious enemy, from savage fire,

the city they had liberated from its dead crust of ice with their own hands and surrounded with impenetrable defences. These men were worthy to perform the symphony, and the music was worthy of them, because it expressed what they had gone through in defending the city and preserving its life and unquenchable creative spirit.

At last the date of the first performance of Shostakovich's Seventh Symphony was fixed. On August 9th, 1942, the white-pillared Philharmonic Hall was brilliantly lighted, and all its festive yet solemn appearance was in keeping with the excited, expectant mood of the Leningrad people. The hall began to fill very quickly with its audience of Stakhanovites, civil defence workers, Party and economic workers, commanders of the defence forces, writers and artists.

The musicians came on to the stage. The enormous platform of the Philharmonic seemed to be full to capacity. The big scratch orchestra sat behind the music-stands; some in the uniforms of the Red Army and Navy, the artists Yassinyavski and Presser, who had saved the Radio Committee building from fire, the artists Shakh, Safonov and Arkin, who last year had dug pits and trenches around the city—it was an orchestra that brought together not only musicians but also the fighters and defenders of their native city, who were ready at any moment to change their musical instruments for a shovel, rifle or fireman's hose.

Eliasberg went up to the conductor's desk. He was greeted with round upon round of applause, a tribute to him for the unremitting efforts which had created the orchestra and for the speedy preparation of the Symphony under the difficult circumstances of the siege.

There was a moment of absolute silence, and then the music began.

And all the people of Leningrad, whether in the hall or listening to the music on the wireless, knew that it was about themselves. They knew that the enemy was still too close to the city, that the enemy was preparing to take it by storm and that he would try to overwhelm Leningrad with new trials. But the terrible year of siege had not weakened them nor frightened them, but tempered their will, fusing it in fire and cooling it in ice. The people had become stronger, more enduring, calmer, a fact which was demonstrated even by this concert in the besieged and blockaded city, where the enemy was at the very gates. It was demonstrated by the genial music that was born in that city and was vigorously and freely played there in spite of all the difficulties. This was a victory indeed, and a pledge of the decisive victory to come.

Inspired by the Seventh Symphony, their own Leningrad symphony, the people left the hall full of confidence in the strength and courage of the steadfast human collective known as Leningrad.

THE CITY OF SCIENCE AND ART

By D. Slaventator

THE moon is sailing through the clouds above the city, lighting up the buildings, the sparkling snow-covered roofs, the famous chariot-crowned theatre, the bridges, the columns bordering the deserted, bowl-like open space. From time to time the air is shaken by heavy thuds from the German long-range guns.

A man in a fireman's helmet walks into the reading-room, in which the only light is from a table-lamp. There is something unusual about this palatial room; side by side with the carved gilt furniture stand plain wooden racks filled with books in many languages, and posters on how to deal with incendiary bombs. The man who has come in takes off his helmet, lays it aside and sits down at a round table made of dark polished wood. The lamp sheds its light on his lean face as he bends over a manuscript.

He had spent three years in Southern Armenia excavating the remains of a palace of the ancient kingdom of Urarta, the most ancient kingdom in the territory of the Soviet Union. Now when he is off duty, he goes on with his thesis, 'Urarta in Transcaucasia,' for his Doctorate.

After a while a man who has been bricking up the windows comes into the room. "The shelling has stopped," he says. "I'm going to get on a bit further with Navoi."

And he sits down and begins to work on his translation of Navoi in readiness for the centenary celebrations which are to be held in the Hermitage. Soon the whole Soviet Union will celebrate the fifth centenary of the birth of the great poet of the Uzbeks, and Leningrad will naturally celebrate the occasion. That is why the man who has been bricking up the windows wants to get on with his translation.

"And may thy words' bright spring bloom like a rose of wit," he reads out quietly as he writes:

He only is good who is the friend of truth,
Justice is necessary to us, like the sun.
When truth is joined with power,
That power is strong, unshakable.

So they work in this studious room, surrounding themselves with books, arguing, thinking, writing or arranging little scientific conferences at times when there happen to be no alerts, but in the evenings it becomes a real branch of the House of Scientists. An Academician goes up to the lamp. He is a vivacious man with sparkling, energetic

dark eyes and a magnificent thick beard, which time has touched with grey.

"I see the clubmen are having an argument," Orbeli remarks, smiling. He sits down and listens, and without realizing it he is soon involved in the discussion himself. He still has the same indomitable temperament. He is just the same as he was, when in 1919 he set up his own work in the Armenian language on the old Academy printing press.

That was in the days when the city was blockaded, and people who were getting a ration of two ounces of bread founded scientific institutes. How they worked in those days, he and his teacher Marr, how much and how enthusiastically they worked!

And now once again the giant city is passing through days of trial, and the scholar sees that this intellectual passion has not been extinguished in the people of the new generation.

The long-drawn-out wail of the sirens echoes over the darkened city. All jump up from where they have been working, gather up their manuscripts, dissertations, and note-books, and putting on their steel helmets, hurry off to their posts in the dark halls or on the roof to guard their Hermitage.

No, the great-hearted city of Lenin has not been unfaithful to itself, to its tradition of great deeds and great thoughts! It is still the creative city in all its parts.

Here is the Leningrad Botanical Garden of the Academy of Science. The subtle fragrance of flowering plants fills the glass-houses. The reflection of green stalks floats in the clear water of the small cement pool, and the firm white buds of the Japanese medlar are motionless in the warm air.

During the raids, the keepers of the Garden listen carefully to the drone of the planes, for they are anxious, not for themselves, but for the fragile glass-houses. One night incendiary bombs fell in the walks of the park. The keepers quickly put them out with sand and water. Hundreds of men have gone from the Garden to the front. Those who have remained are doing the work of the others, they too are doing work for the national war.

Here is moss that is used as a substitute for cotton-wool; it disinfects wounds no worse, if not better. These little packets sewn up in muslin are now being sent to all the hospitals. That is a contribution to the war-effort from Doctor Savich-Lyubitzkoi. Then there are these bottles of yellow balsam, which smells of resin and heals suppurating wounds in a very short time. It was invented by Professor Yakimov, the chemistry expert of the Botanical Garden.

A leading scientist who had worked his way up from hospital assistant was engaged on research on the restoration of vitality after apparent death. He had restored animals to life. But with the out-

break of war the saving of soldiers' lives became the supreme duty. He worked painstakingly in laboratories and operating theatres for a long time, and the result is exhibited here in a small phial with the label of the Leningrad Institute of Blood Transfusion. The liquid it contains is unaffected by heat or cold and means the difference between life and death to the wounded man to whom it is administered on the actual battlefield.

The city of Lenin is faithful to itself, the city of Russian culture. A radio concert is going on and Chaikovsky's Fifth Symphony floats over the city. It is followed by an extract from *War and Peace* read by a master of the spoken word.

And then there resounds over Leningrad the immortal music of Pushkin's poem:

Hail to the Muses!

Hail to Reason!

The Germans are battering the city with their guns. They would like to silence the voice that glorifies reason, but it will not be hushed:

Hail to the sun!

The darkness is lifting!

The whole city seems to be sending up to the sky the music of Pushkin's verse. The whole city, all its squares, buildings, palaces and dwellings.

A thin-looking man in a blue beret with a white woollen cloth thrown over his shoulders like a plaid is sitting on the bed; a shaded lamp standing on a pile of books lights up his emaciated face. With his note-book lying on his upraised knees he works uninterruptedly from morning to night as though nothing in his life had changed. He begins to feel chilly, so lays down his pen, breathes on his fingers to warm them and then goes on with his writing.

From beyond the doors of the room in which this man is working—he is Boris Asafyev, the popular artist, composer and authority on music—comes the sound of rapid footsteps and the light rustle of dresses. Out there is the foyer of the theatre and it is the interval. But he is writing and does not hear.

It is a long time since the composer felt such creative energy—in spite of everything! During the war he has written: *Songs of Severity*, the suite *Suvorov*, a cycle of Russian nocturnes called *Nightpiece*, the symphony *Native Land*. The artist answered the roar of the bombardments with music inspired by the love of country.

Then came the day when the first shell exploded in the square where he lived; his windows were blown out. Apparently he would have to say good-bye to the home with which so many memories were linked, where he had written the music for *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*,

composed *The Flame of Paris* and worked on *The Prisoner of the Caucasus*. And now, it seemed, he would have to find another place. He was advised to leave the city altogether. "You'll be able to get a seat in a plane," he was told. He smiled. Twenty-two years before, when Yudenitch was threatening the city, Lunacharsky had sent for him and said to him: "Here's your exit permit. I'm glad to be able to help you." Asafyev took the permit, but later on, as he was going down the stairs, he tore it up; and that was why he smiled when history repeated itself. "I'm a Leningrad man. All my roots are here, I can't move anywhere else." All the same he had to leave his home, so he moved into the Pushkin Theatre, and decided to live, write and work there. He regarded work as his patriotic duty.

... The performance in the theatre has long been over. The foyer and the corridors are empty. The majestic building with its faintly gleaming white pillars stands before the snow-covered trees of the square like a motionless ship of stone. The antique lamps at the corners of the building swing to and fro in the wind, reminding one of the people and carriages that drove away from the theatre in the days of Pushkin.

In another part of the city, in one of the rooms of an old building of the time of the Empress Elizabeth, surrounded by a gallery with thick stone walls, two scientists are having a quiet conversation. One of them is Professor Yagunov. He has carried out research work on the behaviour of the human organism at great altitudes. The other is Professor Dolinov. In a laboratory of the All-Union Institute of Experimental Medicine, situated behind railings in a quiet, tree-lined street, he has continued to work along the lines of Pavlov's theories, and to apply them to the treatment of nervous diseases.

Yagunov arranged a collection of white mice, rabbits and guinea-pigs at a Leningrad airfield and took them up on flights himself so as to observe their reactions.

These men, like many others, have gone on working in spite of the siege. One day they were sent for by Army Headquarters. "We want you to organize a hospital," they were told. "The first batches of wounded will arrive in three days' time. Here is the hospital commissar. Get acquainted. Get busy." And they began to get busy. Women with empty baskets climbed the staircases of enormous blocks of flats and visited the little wooden houses in Vassilievski Ostrov, coming back loaded with plates, knives and forks. Students carted off tables and stands. Girl students swabbed the floors and staircases with hot water. Blowlamps spluttered in the yard of the old building, welding the metal parts of old bedsteads. Someone dragged up some rubber-tired ice-cream carts, hoping to adapt them for distributing the food in the hospital wards.

And while this hubbub of organization was going on, the two scientists were settling the general principles of the therapeutic methods they would adopt. This was the harvest they were gathering from the years they had spent in quiet laboratories.

Hastening the process of healing in wounds is a question under discussion. A woman assistant doctor recalls that popular medicine in the mountains of her native Svanetia makes use of the aloe, a flowering plant with green pulpy leaves. Yagunov and Dolinov investigate the substance squeezed from the aloe leaves and delve into text-books and monographs. Yes, there is sense in popular medicine, and at the hospital's request hot-houses at the Botanical Gardens grow aloes under the Leningrad sky.

Wide use is also made of Pavlov's theory of inhibition, which protects the nervous system from disintegration.

A soldier suffering from severe shell shock was brought into the hospital. He sat huddled up, staring in front of him with dim, expressionless eyes. He no longer heard or spoke. A scrap of paper was put in front of him, suggesting he write something. He gazed in bewilderment at the white paper, understood something with difficulty, then joyfully nodded his head and tried for hours to write, scrawling with his incapable hand. He was unable to make any intelligible signs.

No stimulants were given him. Pavlov's pupil made the patient's nervous system rest. The scientist had recourse to the therapy of sleep. The severely shell-shocked soldier slept for nine days, for nine days he was shut out from the external world. His breathing was calm and even. From time to time he woke up, took food and dropped back again into a salutary sleep.

Then the narcotic dose was discontinued. He woke up. That day the air-raid sirens began to wail over the city. The patient was sitting calmly on the bed. A doctor hurried past him, and a most amazing thing happened—the man who had lost the use of speech started talking. "Doctor," he said, "have I got to go down to the shelter?"

And so, in the old building of the Empress Elizabeth's time, with its vaulted, whitewashed walls, in the days of the great war for the fatherland, Pavlov's theory of the protective role of inhibition of the cerebral cortex found its application.

The course of therapeutic sleep was stopped. A professor wearing big rimless eye-glasses over his quiet, observant eyes went up to the patient's bed. He sat down beside the patient, and gently but firmly persuaded him to go to sleep. Sleep closed the patient's eyes. The professor gazed quietly at the sleeping man and after a lapse of five minutes said to him: "You have slept two hours." Another five minutes went by and the professor again said: "Now you have slept four hours."

The patient slept 'eight hours' in this way, and when he woke up he felt as though he had really slept all that time.

There is nothing astonishing in this, it is only the continuation of the work of the great Pavlov. The famous Russian scientist and humanist hoped all his life that his ideas would lead to a way to relieve the sufferings of humanity. 'Our method in the pathological field is only just beginning to reveal its possibilities.' Pavlov's dream has been realized in the defence of the city which he loved so much and in which he lived, worked and died.

ROUTINE DEFENCE WORK

By Vsevolod Vishnievsky

THE units defending the city of Lenin are in high spirits. The country demands increased activity on everybody's part. The people of Leningrad must fight and everyone will fight enough for three.

I want to relate a number of episodes and war-incidents which will show what the Leningrad man is like in action.

Leningrad troops had to capture a fortified railway junction that was defended by S.S. divisions. The Germans had dug themselves deep into the railway embankment and constructed in it embrasured strong points with guns and machine-guns. In some places these strong points were built of stone. All the approaches were mined and came under direct, indirect and flanking fire. Exact calculation and suddenness of attack settled the problem of taking them by storm.

There was a short artillery bombardment. When the explosions ceased the infantry rushed on to the embankment with the battle-cry, "For our country and our great, native Leningrad!" and rolled over it like a ball. The infantry were equipped with bombs and hand-grenades. The S.S. men rushed along the communication trenches and out into the rear, where they were met and turned back with threats by their officers. Then followed five German counter-attacks, some of them psychological ones. The Leningraders said: "No retreat!" Individual groups of soldiers, as for instance that of Pavel Niestierchuk, fought on, although they had lost touch with their own units. This group held out for more than twenty-four hours, repulsed three attacks by the S.S. and re-established contact.

The population of Leningrad act as one people. All consider themselves to be part of the garrison in accordance with the old Russian tradition of sieges. An eighty-five-year-old woman came to a sailors' meeting and said: "My son, and he was no youngster, joined the ranks of the fighters and died. I have written to my second son: 'If you return

before victory, you're no son of mine.' " The language of this towns-woman, who saw the foundation of our revolutionary Leningrad and all the fighting of three revolutions, was curt and categorical. And the response to the old woman does not come from platform speeches but from the war reports. The fighter pilots replied to the death of their trusty comrades Koronetz and Spitzyn by destroying seventy-one Fascist planes, and that is not the end of the account. The men are filled with the one idea of striking back and getting their revenge. One of the Baltic fighter pilots made a head-on attack on eight German aeroplanes and drove them off. A German prisoner of war, Joseph Steidel, stated: "Our men dread these fanatical attacks. When we see these Russians we know they are going to ram us. All our 'aces' carry talismans against being rammed, a custom which was introduced by the leading German 'ace,' the 'world-ace' Melders, who shot down a hundred-and-one planes—on all the fronts of Europe."

But Melders himself was shot down together with his talisman by the Soviet airmen.

I have mentioned the slogan: 'Every one must fight enough for three,' which originated among the soldiers defending Leningrad. The submarines of the Baltic have also increased their attacks. The number of ships sunk by them is three times greater than in the year 1941. In the battles for Leningrad the submarines showed exceptional examples of daring and resoluteness. The submarines have to stay many weeks in the sea among minefields and traps and exposed to attacks by aircraft and 'pursuit' motor-boats. Recently a 12,000-ton German transport carrying troops was sunk. They did not even have a chance to catch a glimpse of the outlines of Leningrad.

One of our submarines, after sinking a number of transports and using up all its torpedoes, caught sight of yet another transport. The submarine attacked, coming up to the surface just beside it, and firing its guns point-blank at the Fascists. The gunners were obliged to fire with amazing quickness, as they had little time, and guns became so hot that Subbotin, the gun commander, was splashed and scalded with burning oil. He fired without moving an inch till the transport went to the bottom.

One of our boatswains vowed he would fight to the last man. In the battle the motor-boat caught fire. Nevertheless, it went on firing till the end. That was the work of the boatswain. He had made his vow in the name of Leningrad.

The naval and army gunners who have set up a wall of artillery around Leningrad are discovering new things in the practice and theory of gunnery. Of course, they have to work under rather turbulent conditions. Fourteen thousand shells, for instance, were fired by the Germans at one artillery position alone. But what a spirit there is

among the Russians, what tenacity and cheerful courage! And in battle the men are as hard as flints. They become firmer, more alert and fierce. They realize that softness, complacency and indecision are deadly harmful. Any slackness may lead to an unnecessary loss of life.

The heavy breech-blocks of the long-range guns clank loudly. The gunner's voice rings out in the twilight: "I fire for myself, my sister and mother, and for those who have been tortured by the Germans." There is a flash. The trees bend towards the ground. The gun recoils, and there is a sharp smell of gunpowder. A German heavy shell whistles over in reply and explodes five yards away. A young sailor 'bobs down.' The Deputy Political Director says to him: "You've met the Germans before, so whom are you bobbing to? Remember you're a Baltic sailor." Since then the man has got out of the habit of bobbing.

A severely wounded Red Navy man was dying in a high-speed trawler. He called to his comrades, took one of them by the hand and said: "I shan't live. . . . Defend the country, stand up for Leningrad. . . . That's all. Good-bye," and he died calmly on the deck.

Everyone took leave of their dead friend, swearing to stick to their posts to the last, to move only towards the enemy.

Leningrad is now sending torpedoes to the submarines, bombs to the bombers, automatics and hand grenades to the infantry. Now the batteries are firing again. The city is again going into battle.

PEOPLE

By Nikolai Tikhonov

THE enemy was forcing his way through to Leningrad, and fighting was taking place at the approaches to the city. There were innumerable acts of individual heroism, testifying to the high morale of the Soviet soldier and to his courage and endurance.

Our city is protected by a whole system of complicated fortifications which were constructed at high speed by the civilian population. The front has become an unsurmountable barrier to the enemy. If you leave the front line district and pass into the city, you will see how well prepared it is for resolute defence. Take a look at the districts just behind the front. Everything there speaks of the steadfast resolve of the Leningrad people to defend their city to the last breath.

The enemy is near, but Leningrad is majestically calm. Take a look at the streets and side-streets of the centre, cross the broad Neva, take a peep at Vasilievski Ostrov, Vyborgskaya Storona, Novaya Derievnya or the port area, and everywhere you will see a great pulsating life

that does not stop for a single moment. You will see children taking a walk, sailors busy loading their boats, people in the shops, young men marching with rifles on their shoulders, girls in military uniform, a scholar with books and a driver at the wheel of a lorry carrying food-stuffs sent from the country beyond Lake Ladoga.

According to the French, the people who take a direct part in military actions are combatants. The rest are non-combatants, that is to say, peaceful inhabitants. But all the people not in military uniform whom you see in the streets and squares of Leningrad are also combatants. They are taking part in the defence in their own particular way. Nobody can take that honour from them.

The Stakhonovite worker Poliakova expressed the fundamental idea which was and remains the heart and soul of the Leningrad people when she said at a factory meeting: "The barbarians are demolishing the walls of our houses—we will build them up again. They are setting fire to our buildings—we will put out the fires. They are wounding our people—we will heal them. They are killing our husbands—our sons and wives will take their places!"

Hatred of the Hitlerites is a mighty force. It has taken hold of everybody, from the young woman worker to the old woman weaver who has stood at her loom since the days of the October Revolution, from the pupil of the technical school to the grey-haired veteran of the factory.

"Death isn't terrible, but life under Fascism is terrible," said Praskovia Kruglyakova, an old woman worker of Leningrad. She gave a talk on the wireless to young women, her young working friends. She told them about her hard, poverty-stricken youth under the old regime, the oppression she had had to put up with, and what a shop-keeper, a policeman, a factory owner and a copper's nark meant—all the sort of people the Fascists wanted to foist once again on to the backs of the workers.

The young women sent a long letter in reply, and said in conclusion: "We have heard what you said. We daughters swear to our beloved Mother that the Fascists shall not enter our city."

In the hour of trial the Russian has always found within himself an enormous spiritual strength which has made it possible for him to rise above everything trivial, workaday and domestic and to devote himself wholeheartedly to the defence of his country. With patience and hard work we have overcome enormous difficulties. We have not created our Soviet State so that an arrogant aggressor may plunder and destroy everything. We have not beautified and extended our city so that robbers and murderers may live in it. The people of Leningrad—the vanguard of the Soviet people—have found the strength and the capacity for the struggle and for victory.

It is hard and honourable to work in our city. Take any job of work. The rhythm of labour flowed calmly and majestically in peace time in the enormous port of Leningrad, with its multitude of ships, forests of masts, piles of crates and bales, where the very uproar testified to the ever-rising scale of our national production. And here is the old seaman Sergei Georgievich Kozlov, who goes about the port which he has known all his life, accompanied by the whistling of German bullets, the roar of exploding shells and the dull thuds of bombs. If he looks through field-glasses, he can see the Fritzies. To take a ship through the Morskoi Canal to the port requires great skill and endurance; it has to be done under the fire of the German batteries. And how many times he has been attacked by planes in the Bay! The water spouts up in fountains higher than the masts, the ship rocks like a chip of wood, and yet it gets away.

The young men take an example from the old ones. The young men of the city are preparing to fight. They diligently attend the military training centres, where wounded officers and experienced front-line men teach them their job. Boris Zubkov, following the example of his comrades, wanted to put in a request to be sent to the front as soon as his training was over. He was only stopped by the thought of his sick mother, who would have nobody to look after her. He wrote a letter to his father, a marine on the Leningrad front, and his father told him first of all to finish his training, passing out with 'excellent,' and then he should go to the front. "We'll smash at the Fascists together," he added. "I from the sea, and you from the land." The son read the letter out to his mother. "Well, I'll manage without you somehow," she said. "You go. Your father is right."

Lydia Zatelepina, a workwoman of the 'Skorokhod' factory, is training to be a junior commander. She says quite simply: "Shooting's my line. I don't shoot badly. I'm not going to boast—we'll see when we get down to business." She is a Leningrad girl, and there are many more like her. You can take her word for it—she will show her fighting skill on the job. You can't frighten her.

Before the war young lads in black uniforms and caps used to march in groups through the streets. They were the keenest boys of the technical schools. They have been called on to take up responsible work in the factories, where the adults have either been sent to the front or evacuated. They have a great responsibility. Here is one of them, Nikolai Kupriashov, who is working in the third division in an armament factory, but doing the work of the fourth and fifth divisions. He is fifteen years old, but he talks with confidence and seriousness: "I get on with the job whatever the difficulties. I turn out thirty per cent above my quota. I like my work. I've already got assistants and pupils. I teach pretty well. I spend as much time as necessary at the

factory—the whole day, sometimes two days, till I've finished the job."

Such are the new people who are being bred in the fire of war; they are of an incomparable type. This young citizen can serve as an example even to grown-up workers. His indefatigable perseverance in work is the pledge of his future development. The remarkable gifts of the Russian people show clearly in this Vologda boy who is helping to defend Leningrad. Nothing has been able to get him down, neither cold nor hunger, nor air raids.

In the city there are many women who say modestly: "I'm a housewife." But examine the life of such a woman in these days. Here is Alexandra Treukhova from a house in Apraksin Street. She is the leader of a self-defence group. Bombs were whistling near her, and incendiaries dropping on to the house. She stuck to her post, and she is still sticking to it. Thousands of similar housewives have saved their homes from the fires, brought timely help to the sick and helped the orphans and old people. Day after day they have quietly carried out their great work, which at a casual glance does not appear to be anything remarkable.

In the city there are many people who go to the Blood Transfusion Institute and give their blood for the wounded soldiers. Even in the cruel, cold, starving month of December they turned up at the Institute as though at a front-line position. An old donor, Vera Leinert, for instance, can be proud of the fact that all her family is giving this 'debt of blood.' When her daughter reached the age of eighteen, she said to her mother excitedly: "I can't stand aside in times like these. I must give some of my blood!" And she became a donor. Vera Leinert's father, an old man of sixty, said: "My daughter and grand-daughter are donors. I want to become a donor too." And there is no more regular donor than he.

There are many similar families of donors. The Leningraders go in shoals to the Institute, which is unequalled in the world for the grand scale of its work. The soldiers from the front write letters of gratitude, and these moving letters are the highest reward to the nameless heroines of the front-line city for their simple and precious help.

There are many children in the city. There are many orphans, children who have gone through untold winter sufferings and are in need of attention and warm maternal care.

Take a look at the children's home where Vera Rogova is working as a nurse. She is twenty-one and studied history at the university, but she did not go with it when it was evacuated. She remained behind to turn an empty, dirty building into a children's home and to help to save many little children and to lay a foundation for their peaceful, happy childhood.

The children came from everywhere—they were all orphans. There was nobody to look after them. The nurses took them in, gave them every attention, took them for walks about the city, told them its history, and pointed out to them the famous buildings and the Neva, and the children began to look at their native city in a different way.

A farewell evening was arranged for the children who were to be evacuated, under the title of 'We are from Leningrad.' The little Leningraders recited passages from the classics and poetry about the great city. They talked about their relations and their life, and the happy times they had had in the home which had given them shelter. They will always remember how they were loved and cared for there, and will say proudly: "We are from Leningrad!" Back in the rear, they will describe how they wrote letters to the soldiers in the front line and to the guerrillas who brought gifts to the city through the enemy lines; and how they lived and learned their lessons in the beloved city of Lenin in the terrible days of battle.

THE HIGHWAY OVER THE ICE

By N. Shikin

IN the difficult days of the siege of Leningrad the whole country came to the help of the Leningraders. Columns of transport carrying provisions came from Moscow, Siberia, Middle Asia, Gorki and the Urals. But the chief merit in breaking the blockade belongs to the famous ice road across Lake Ladoga, which the people rightly called 'the way to life.'

The story of the road is truly unexampled. Lake Ladoga was already ice-bound at the beginning of November. The ships and barges with cargoes for Leningrad and the armies at the front were at a standstill beside the quays, being powerless to cut their way through the ice. The enemy hoped that the ice would close the ring of the blockade and that Leningrad, which the Germans were unable to take by storm, would be starved into submission. The Germans assumed that it would be impossible to bring up provisions, war supplies and other essential freight for the city of many millions of inhabitants and troops across the ice of Lake Ladoga. They based their calculations on the fact that Lake Ladoga was treacherous and that its characteristics had not been thoroughly well studied. Storms rage on the lake in the autumn, it freezes unevenly and the ice is subject in winter to break-ups and banking.

But the unswerving will of the Bolsheviks conquered the forces

of nature. On the initiative of A. Zhdanov, a motor road was laid down across the ice. Leningrad and the front received supplies in such quantities that it was possible to build up the necessary reserves.

Of course there were a good many difficulties that had to be overcome. In November and December, when the enemy succeeded in capturing Tikhvin and cutting the railway line, the motor route extended over many hundreds of kilometres. During the severe weather when there were forty degrees of frost, the drivers did not leave their machines for whole days in order to get the necessary loads to the heroic defenders. For instance, Driver-sergeant Fastovski, since rewarded with the Order of the Red Star, drove 480 kilometres in thirty-two hours.

The new ice creaked and wobbled. There were not a few cases when it failed to stand the weight of the loaded machine and gave way. Then the drivers and their mates plunged into the icy water and did their utmost to save the load and the machine. One of these was Driver Kondrin, who was awarded the Order of the Red Banner for his courageous work on the ice road, and there were many others.

Blizzards blotted out the road, and every day the enemy would shell it with his heavy guns with monotonous regularity. The Fascist planes flew over in swarms, dropping land mines on the ice and shooting up transport with machine-guns. But nothing could crush the bravery of the Soviet people and their will to victory. Every warrior of the ice road realized that he was carrying out Stalin's orders and felt himself to be a front-line soldier.

On December 26th, 1941, the bread ration of Leningrad was increased. That was the first victory. But the road was still far from having fulfilled the transport plan as laid down. In those difficult moments Zhdanov, who had kept a close watch on the working of the ice road, addressed a letter to the workers of the route.

'In the name of Leningrad and the front,' he wrote, 'I beg you to consider yourselves engaged on a great and responsible job, in which you are carrying out a task of supreme national and military importance. . . . Each man at his post must carry out his task like a soldier in the front line.'

Zhdanov's appeal evoked a new spirit of enterprise among the soldiers and commanders of the military-automobile road. The drivers, traffic controllers, roadmen and mechanics started Socialist emulation, trying to achieve the greatest number of journeys. Vassiliev, one of the best drivers, who was subsequently awarded the Order of the Red Star, answered Zhdanov's appeal by doing eight journeys one after the other in two shifts. The brave driver did not leave his lorry for forty-eight hours; in a 'GAZ-AA' machine he covered 1,029 kilometres and carried twelve tons of load.

Following Vassiliev's example, two or three journeys in one shift began to be completed by scores of drivers, men who set the pace for others by sparing no effort themselves and disregarding every danger. From January 7th to 19th the transports were doubled. On January 18th for the first time the road fulfilled the transport plan laid down by the War Council.

The experience of the leading men of the road made it possible to carry into effect the slogan: 'Two journeys a day from every driver.' It was the Communist and Young Communist drivers who set the example of this truly heroic work. They were the initiators of the two-journey movement and inspired the others with their example. The last stage of the work of the road was marked by the fact that not only scores but hundreds of drivers were making two or three or more journeys a day.

The stream of loads for Leningrad and the front increased day by day. In all kinds of weather, night and day, the lorries with their precious freight moved in an endless stream along the ice racks. It was a wonderful sight: thousands of moving lights lit up the ice of old Lake Ladoga.

The heroic roadmen of the units under the leadership of Mozhayev and Yumashev did not allow the tracks to get covered with snowdrifts for a single hour even during the worst blizzard. The traffic regulators and mechanics, the workers of the ambulance stations and the anti-aircraft men who protected the road from the Fascist air pirates, all did their work with courage and daring.

A sublime, noble purpose—the provisioning of the city of Lenin—inspired the warriors of the road; they literally forgot to sleep or eat.

One of the heroes of the track, Driver Burilichev, well said: "If I work two or three days without a break and transport tons of load in excess of the plan, I know that this is my contribution to the victory fund. It is for you, Leningrad, and for your heroic defenders."

In the spring, which came in April, the ice of the lake was covered with water, which rose in some places to a height of two feet. Nonetheless the machines continued to cross till the last possible moment. They went like motor-boats, cleaving the water and sending up showers of spray. And when it was no longer possible to use the lorries, the drivers carried their freight in their arms across the lake, the last gift of the ice road to the great city of Lenin—dozens of tons of valuable freight.

The transport workers, commanders and political workers made a great contribution to the heroic defence of Leningrad. The country and Leningrad will never forget their valour and their work.

LENINGRAD CALENDAR, 1942

By Nikolai Tikhonov

MAY

ANYONE who had seen Leningrad in January and February would hardly recognize the city now. Snowdrifts lay in the streets in those days, lumps of ice were slipping from the roofs, the pavements were hidden under layers of frozen snow, dirt was piled up in mounds, the yards were choked up with refuse, the debris of shattered walls lay scattered over the streets. There were bricks, broken barrels frozen into the snow, twisted, broken pipes, shattered window frames, piles of broken glass. This was the scene that met your eyes everywhere.

But now you walk along clean broad streets and splendid embankments that look just as though they had been swept with a gigantic broom. It was by no means easy to achieve this result. Three hundred thousand Leningraders worked day after day to clean up the city. To the titanic tasks accomplished by the people of Leningrad there was added yet another, the like of which the world had never seen before. The cleansing of the famous Augean stables was child's play compared to this enormous task, which was carried through by people worn out by the rigours of a terrible winter. Everybody worked—women, men, office workers, workmen, artists, writers, soldiers, sailors and militiamen.

The rails appeared from underneath the yard-deep snow, and the first tram went along them accompanied with the applause of thousands of people. It was not a swallow but a tram that brought the Spring to Leningrad in 1942. The common hardships of the blockade knit the people closer together, and everybody in the first tram-cars tried to be kind and considerate.

The young grass shows green on the lawns. Muddy water still fills the slit-trenches to remind you that the roads at the front are under water, that the Germans are splashing about in their dug-outs, and the marshes now impassable. But in the gaping hollow of a bombed wall the first brave butterfly of this war-time Spring is fluttering its wings.

There are smiling faces again. People sit basking in the sun; the boys with books in the hands (the schools are being re-opened), the old women wrapped up in enormous shawls and munching bread.

Opposite them stand the observers with field-glasses in their hands, scanning the blue, cloudless, gentle sky. The anti-aircraft guns point their green muzzles eagerly upwards in readiness for the enemy.

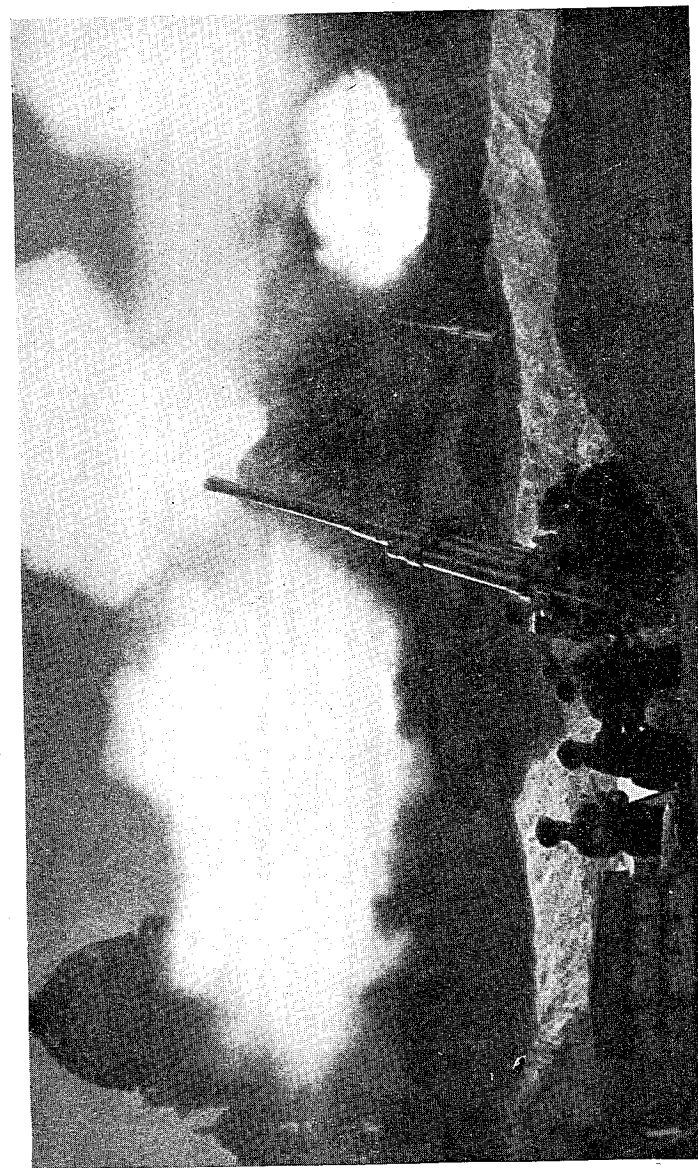
The warships are being overhauled in a wonderful way by the sailors themselves. They have even carried out repairs needing a spell in dry dock, but now they have done everything with their own hands. All honour to the brave sailors of the Baltic! The Neva is already free of ice, and the swift little launches race about it like water-bugs. The Navy is ready for the spring campaign. The ice of Lake Ladoga is floating down the river, and it has piled up against the bridges the remains of the winter military roads. The sodden logs and poles toss on the dark waters of the Neva, and the sea-gulls scream and whirl above them.

But the Germans are near, they are quite close, and the city is still besieged. If you go to the top storey of a high building, you can see with field-glasses the German front lines in the bluish haze. Sailors are walking arm in arm with girls along the embankment. The wail of the sirens echoes over the river. The sailors break off their promenade and run to their ships, the quays are quickly deserted, and the sky is already booming with anti-aircraft shells. German planes are trying to break through into the city. They try every day, and every day they are intercepted on the way, shot down or chased back, and dropping their bombs at random, they make off at top speed. Few of them succeed in getting through to the city. When that happens, the bombs fall, the dust rises in clouds and the window-panes fly out. These scenes no longer frighten anybody—the people of Leningrad have been under fire and are hardened.

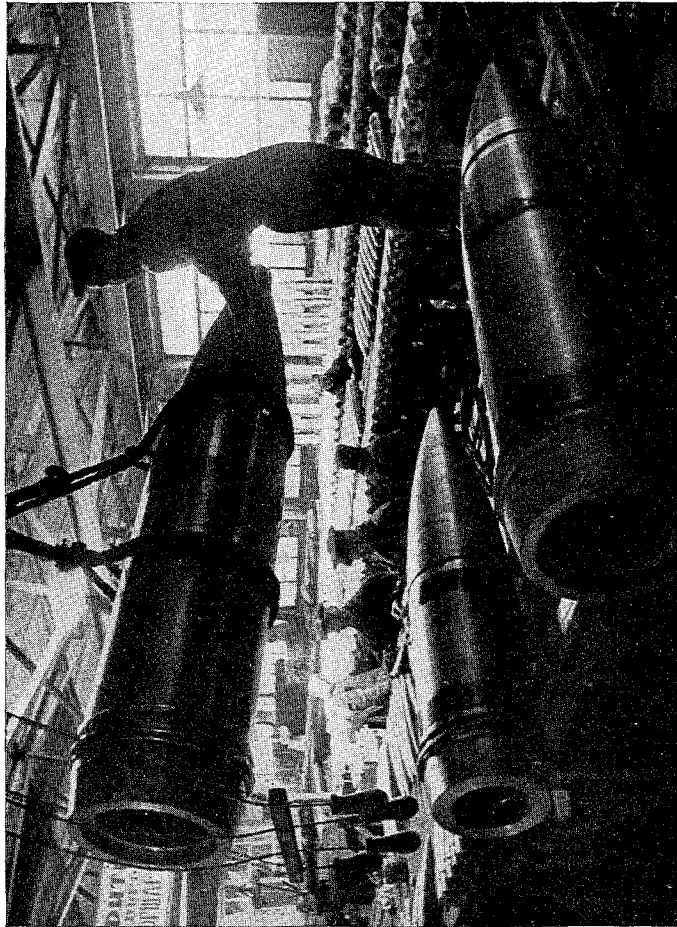
They come out of their shelters and go on with their work. May the First was a working day, but crowds of cheerful, energetic and steadfast Leningraders thronged the streets, to which the flags fluttering from the houses and bright posters gave a festive air. And once again it was obvious that the enemy would not see the inside of the city, whatever adventurous schemes he might resort to.

There are many children in the city. In the children's hostels these little citizens had a special holiday treat on the First of May. Each received a little bag and there were shouts of joy as they tore them open. Sweets, chocolates, sugar-candies and ginger-breads showered on to their laps. Some of the children were without red hair-ribbons, as there were not enough to go round, so their teacher tore up her red crêpe-de-Chine scarf and made bows for them of the strips.

Just then the first German shell came over, and then the roar of explosions began. They had started to pound the district again with ten-inch shells. Howling, they tore through roofs and into houses. Once again there were showers of glass, pedestrians threw themselves



Anti-aircraft Gun in Action



Inside a Leningrad Shell Factory During the Siege

on to the ground, and fragments splintered the trees of the boulevards and the kiosks.

Our guns began to answer. The usual battery duel commenced. Shells flew over the dark, tall factory chimneys, where the enormous factory was still going on with its work in spite of the shellings. This huge plant has come to seem like a warship for ever in the thick of a tremendous battle. Shells have torn through its walls, exploded in its yards, its workshops and the passages to the street.

The Vyborg district is courageously standing up to the constant shelling. In the streets and in the neighbourhood of the Finland Railway Station it is sometimes hotter than at the front, where it is comparatively quiet among the pine-trees and hills—a calm before fresh battles.

As in the autumn, you can go by tram almost to the front and there go on foot to the magnificent houses of the new residential quarter, which all Leningraders know so well, and you will find the emptiness and alertness of the front itself. There tank destroyers are held in readiness, snipers go out to the forward positions after resting-up, batteries are concealed and the men of the most responsible service—the aircraft observers—watch for the approach of the swift enemy planes.

Sometimes a hellish barrage opens up, and then dies down as quickly as it began. The Germans are sitting tight in their dug-outs. Having got as far as this in August and September, 1941, they have been unable to move a step forward, but from the shore of the bay and the high hills they can see through field-glasses the outlines of the city, St. Isaac's Cathedral and the spire of the Admiralty.

Spring has come. The bay is teeming with mines. The thunder of gun-fire fills the air. All the inhabitants of the city are on defence work. Many have been evacuated, and the streets are quiet and empty. Leningrad no longer resembles the former peaceful and cheerful city, it has become stern, alert and formidable. It awaits the enemy's rash ventures with the calm of an experienced soldier; it is ready for fresh battles. It had a hard time in the winter, but that is already a long way behind. Our fighter planes are barring the way in the clear sky. Our ships keep guard on the water, and the 'Marat' sends salvo after salvo into the enemy's fortifications.

This is Leningrad's first war Spring, and everyone is confident that here the Germans will be smashed. In May Leningrad is altogether a different city from what it was last August and in January. Only in one thing it is still the same: it has remained inaccessible, proud and splendid.

JUNE

THERE is a glorious blue sky, and the clouds sailing up from the bay are white and fleecy. There are bunches of bird-cherry blossom in women's hands. In the tram-cars coming from the suburbs the women have sprays of wild cherry blossom on their laps, and spades in their hands. But those sun-burnt hands have not been digging only trenches; they are now working on the production front—the whole city is busy with its gardens. Girls in dinky kerchiefs, old-time working-women from whose faces the shadows of the hungry winter have gradually disappeared, men who have not yet joined the army, old grey-beards—all of them carry spades and are talking about planting, about early maturing varieties of potatoes, carrots and cabbages.

Vegetable plots are springing up in the city itself, on the boulevards, on the lawns, in tiny garden patches, in the empty spaces between the enormous windowless backs of the houses and beside the monuments in the public gardens. Everywhere the plots are beginning to show green.

A little boy, thin as a sparrow, with puffy eyes over his sunken cheeks, is pelting a little girl with bits of turf. She draws herself up to her full height and shouts at him in a ringing voice: "Ah, you nasty dystrophic! Let me catch you, I'll give it to you!"

She is a strong-looking girl with rosy cheeks. The word 'dystrophic,' a plaintive, dismal, whining word belonging to the dreadful winter, has become a term of abuse among the children.

German shells are bursting with the usual monotonous roar two streets away from them. Clouds of smoke and dust fly up into the sky. Some people are standing at the tram stop. They do not even pay any attention to these tiresome sounds. They have all been long enough under fire; there is no frightening them.

The city realizes that apart from everything else it has got to do it must now help itself to improve the food supplies. Kitchen gardens! That is the keynote of the new work. Kitchen gardens are also a front.

Young Red Army men are training beyond the city. They go into the attack, dig themselves in, carry out co-operation with mortars and guns. A strict commander shouts at one of them: "What are you up to? Think you're out for a stroll in the country. You've already been killed three times by the Germans, but you don't seem to have noticed it!"

The disconcerted soldier dives into the communication trench.

Along the road come the gardeners. Horses are grazing in the fields, and cows stray about, chewing the fresh grass. Shell-bursts dot the sky with little clouds, and the roar of the anti-aircraft guns accompanies

the scattered Messerschmitts that have been driven back from the city. Our fighter planes are rushing after them, and a dog-fight begins.

The planes are being watched also from the grounds of a big factory, where women who have taken the place of the men are working in the enormous workshops. They work intently and in silence. It is not easy for them to do work which requires great physical strength, skill and endurance, but they are persevering and accurate. A woman with blue spectacles over her eyes is turning a shell on a lathe. Her whole body is strained, but you can see by her confident, powerful movements that she is no longer a novice. Showers of big, white sparks play on her hands in their thick gauntlets. The shell is heavy, but she turns it quite easily, immersed entirely in her work. From time to time she wipes the sweat from her face and listens to the thunder of our guns. Their roar stimulates her tremendously. Perhaps they are her shells that are flying over there at Germans, and with fresh determination she takes up the next shell with the strong hands of a master craftsman.

Some women are sitting in a silent group, and round about them is the dark and grey earth of the casting moulds. Their sleeves are folded back so that they can work more comfortably, and their arms are covered right up to the elbows with a silvery film of metal dust. These arms gleam in the cool semi-darkness of the great building. The silvery fingers plunge nimbly into the grey earth, and you feel you can't take your eyes off these arms and these silent women working for the front.

They are not concerned about anything except that Leningrad has got to have shells, and that the work has got to go on day and night. Their faces are stern and their movements are concentrated, like their thoughts. A few miles away from them their menfolk are standing in the trenches with their rifles in their hands. They write back short letters and notes, which are brought to the factory, and the women take them with their silvery hands.

These women were not factory workers in peace-time. They include young girls who have come straight from school and quite elderly women, but they are now all one fighting family.

The director gets a telephone message from the foundry, that the shells are falling nearer and nearer. What's to be done? Hold up the casting? But nobody thinks of doing that. The director gives orders that a minimum number of volunteers are to be left, and the rest are to go to the shelters. An hour later the bombardment stops. The director telephones: "Well, how goes it?" "Everything's all right!" "Who volunteered to stay on?" "The whole lot." Nobody left. Everyone went on working in the normal way.

The city looks unusually clean. The canals are deserted, for the lighters, barges and tugs that were idle in the winter have gone away to work. They went away in the track of the icefloes, and during the white

night you can hear, as in peace-time, the hooting of the tugs and steamers at the draw-bridges. The two sphinxes still crouch beside the Egyptian Bridge. A shell burst has smashed a paw of one of the winged creatures. But it still gazes with its half-closed eyes straight up the broad embankment, and the scar on its cheek has not altered the expression on its stern face.

The great hotel which has entertained thousands of prominent people in its time is empty and dank. In the winter months the building fell into such a state of disrepair that an enormous amount of painstaking work was needed to restore the battered walls, baths, windows, doors and floors. But it has been done, and all by the hands of doctors, nurses, militia-women, ambulance attendants and Young Communist volunteers. The hospital is as clean as a new pin.

A doctor stands with a paint brush in his hand, putting the last touches to a renovated window-frame. He steps back and looks at the resplendent blue room with the air of an expert. Everybody here has acquired a second trade. They have become carpenters, floor-polishers, painters, porters, plasterers, common labourers. There was plenty of work and nobody else to do it. They worked with a will, without distinction of sex or age, and now the way the building gleams shows you how much devoted effort they must have spent on it.

"If a thing is necessary," says the Leningrader, "it means it has got to be done as quickly and as well as possible."

The old birch-trees rustle quietly beside the blue lake. Red-barked fir-trees stand as though on guard around the scattered little houses in this quiet nook. A woman with a knapsack on her back comes along the road, going perhaps to her allotment. Maybe she has come from the city to visit a relation. No, her eyes are stern, her thin lips are pressed tight.

The sentries stop her. She asks to be taken to the Commissar. To his surprise she calls the Commissar by his name. Where did she get to know him? What does she want? It is the first time he has seen her in his life. She speaks slowly and with confidence: "I've heard a lot about you from my husband. He was an officer and served in your division. He has been killed in action and I want to take his place. Please let me, I want to work only at the front. I want to have a smack at the Germans. I've learnt how to handle a machine-gun."

"Very well," said the Commissar, "you shall be a machine-gunner. We already have one woman machine-gunner and she works well and accurately."

"And so will I," said the woman.

The shadow of a smile appears for the first time on her solemn face.

A calm as before the storm lies over Leningrad. It deceives no one. The city is working intensively, and waiting. It is training for war.

More and more reinforcements join the ranks of the defenders. More and more new workers are taking the place of those who leave for the front. The inhabitants of the city are a huge garrison whose one job is defence and whose only thought is to smash the Germans and break the ring of the blockade. All realize that the demented monstrosity Hitler may launch out on a new campaign of destruction, so it is necessary to be on the alert.

They have to guard the water, the land and the air. They cannot put any trust in the quiet of the white nights and the limpid blue sky where a faint purple dawn suffuses the horizon. They have got to stand at their posts day and night, and check up on their weapons, their municipal economy, and their own nerves, before the decisive battle. The Leningrad people's nerves are strong and the city's economy is being completely regulated, as the state of siege demands. The weapons are in skilful hands. The enemy will pay dearly for a new attempt!

The sun is baking the great sand dunes. The tall pine-trees stand out as though etched. This is the land of pine-trees and water. The lakes entice you to plunge into their shining waters. All is dead still in the thickets, the marshes are quiet, and only the frogs croak their endless song in the evenings.

There is no sign of a human being anywhere. Here and there ruined houses lift up the remains of their charred walls, and lines of barbed wire stick out of the ground. The men have dug themselves in deep in the earth. You can watch a moss-covered tree-stump for hours. It is motionless. Anyway, how can a stump move? Yet it does sometimes just barely stir, for in fact it is not a stump, but a sniper. The mosquitoes dance around him, the birds sing in the bushes, and somewhere a cuckoo,¹ a real grey bird, utters its twofold call.

Suddenly a single shot cracks. The echo rumbles over the waste land, and all is quiet once more. There is one soldier less on the Finnish side; the sniper has wiped out that Finn. He takes out his score-card and adds another stroke to the long column already there. The tree-stump changes its position imperceptibly and the sniper is already watching and waiting again.

Another shot, and another enemy the less. A volley comes from the enemy's side, but it finds no target, it is too late. There is nobody there now.

Gone are the days when the Finns strutted about upright, or worked in the forward positions. Now they crouch as they run along the trenches and dig themselves in as deeply as possible.

Sometimes they call out: "Russ, Russ, give us some bread! Give us some bread!"

¹ Snipers are nicknamed 'Cuckoos' in Soviet Russia.

The bushes and trees are silent. The exasperated Finns throw bottles of inflammable liquid, and the undergrowth and dry, fallen wood flare up. A pungent blue smoke spreads over the ground in long narrow tongues, but the enemy has made a mistake in thinking the fire will run in our direction. The wind carries it towards the Finns. The flame is already licking their camouflage bushes. If they stay in the trench, they'll get burnt. Whether they like it or not, they've got to climb out and extinguish the fire.

Little forms in mousy jackets climb cautiously out of the trench. Probably there is an officer behind them with a revolver in his hand. Everything is quiet. They rummage about in the smoke. More and more of them come on the scene. They try to drag the burning wood apart as quickly as possible. From somewhere in the distance in the forest comes the boom of a gun, followed by a second and a third. The shells burst among the Finns. The smoke of the explosions spreads a pall over their shouting and screaming.

"You asked for trouble," whispers the sniper, as he follows up the shells with his bullets. He had not wanted to frighten the enemy before the guns came into play.

The bombardment was a success. The forest fire spreads unchecked in the Finnish lines, for nobody bothers about it any longer. The trench is abandoned. They have all cleared out of it, even the officer with the revolver could not prevent them.

The Finns have their snipers, too. They too lie in wait for hours on end. They secretly observe our fire-points and gun-pits, or a lone soldier off his guard. Sometimes sniper spots sniper. This happened to one of our most experienced snipers and there began a duel in which the least mistake meant death. Our man was the first to fire. The Finn impudently waved his trenching tool in the air, thereby in the common language of snipers the world over signalling a miss.

Our sniper was Golutvenko, the man who attacked a Finnish trench while on reconnaissance and together with his comrades dispersed the Finns with grenades, killed part of them in a hand-to-hand fight and brought back a young officer for interrogation.

Golutvenko said angrily: "Wait a bit, you skunk, you won't get away from me!" The Finn fired. The bullet whizzed close to Golutvenko's head. He held up his shovel to signal a miss. So it went on for hours. Finally, Golutvenko managed to get into a new and better position. This compelled the Finn to change his position, too. He tried to creep away a good number of times, but always thought better of it. It was too risky.

The duellists fired infrequently, but fatally near the mark. It was only some sort of instinctive movements that saved them. At last Golutvenko's rifle did not return the Finn's shots. For a long time the

Finn refused to trust this silence, but as it seemed it would never end he ventured to ease his position ever so slightly. He got a bullet in him for his pains. He collapsed on the moss with outstretched arms. The duel was over.

Duels of this sort take place every day. They are full of dramatic suspense, and our snipers' successes mount every day.

There is another sector of this front very much the same in appearance. The landscape has the same shining lakes and lofty pines. Only the snipers are not Finns but Germans, who lie concealed in the moss, disguised in camouflage robes. The network of communication trenches is even more complicated, and there is plenty of shooting here, especially in the evenings.

Our snipers lie out all day in the forward positions. All day long the observers keep a look-out for the slightest alteration in the landscape on the enemy's side. They note any increase in the number of firing points or that an anti-tank gun has been brought up. They notice an officer in a black jacket and cap who incautiously shows himself for a moment. That is the end of another S.S. man! A second German crawls over to him and is sent sprawling beside him. A third comes along, and a bullet picks him off a little to one side. Good! Nobody else seems willing to take a risk. The bodies lie there all through the day and evening and the long white night. They can be easily seen through the stereoscopic sight. Next day a mist creeps up, and under its cover the Germans drag the bodies away.

Each side knows when the other is having dinner or supper. There is no chance of the German getting by openly with his mess-tin, he would walk into death. There will be one less Jerry to lap up his greasy soup and chew his ersatz jam that is more like wax.

Artillery activity flares up with the suddenness of a hurricane. The marshy soil wobbles like a huge spring-mattress. One of the batteries here has beaten by a long chalk the famous Malakhov Kurgan at Sebastopol. During its work at this position 8,800 shells, mines and bombs have fallen on its site. There are old and new bomb-craters everywhere. Rusty jagged splinters lie stuck in the turf all over the ground and make all sorts of patterns in the tree-trunks. A cloud burst of metal has poured over the place. But the battery is very much alive and gives such an account of itself that the gunners say the Germans scratch themselves as if they had barber's itch after the close shave it has given them.

Again and again, especially towards evening, the Germans send over a storm of shells. We were sitting on a bench in front of the dug-out when the usual strafe started up. The explosions kept coming nearer and nearer, and the firing grew heavier. We went into the

dug-out. The underground quarters were like a battleship's ward-room in a typhoon. True, it was methodical firing, not altogether like a hurricane, but its obstinate repetition was as irksome. An iron pig smacked down every two or three minutes, and a thundering crash shook the air. After an hour the performance came to an end.

All was quiet again. Fresh bomb-craters had been added to the thousands already there. Then our battery got down to its evening work.

Machine-guns and automatics were heard cracking in the front region. In the forest an ordinary cuckoo was repeating its call. A Messerschmitt boomed over. The crackle of firing came from behind a cloud as he came up against one of our machines. The air battle moved away towards the north.

We went up and down the communication trenches, which reminded me of the familiar pictures of the front in the first World War. And this is what Hitler's blitzkrieg war has been reduced to! Trenches against trenches, sniper against sniper, barbed wire against barbed wire, and the methodical extermination of the Germans, obliging them to forget how people walk upright. They crawl on their bellies into their dug-outs to get away from the bullets, and they sit there at night, fearing an attack. In the day-time they leave only sentries and snipers and go off into the rear to sit in a quieter place. And none of his generals can explain to the German soldier what is going to happen next, ahead is only defeat and inevitable destruction.

In the first World War the Germans smashed themselves against Verdun. Our Verdun is called Leningrad, and it is stronger than the French one. And the people who are defending it are people of a special stamp, they have halted the Germans and made them dig themselves into the ground. Let one but raise his head, and he will not even have time to regret his carelessness!

JULY

This July heavy downpours drench the thick-grown, luxuriant foliage, the innumerable allotments, the metal domes of civic buildings and the spotted barrels of the anti-aircraft guns peering watchfully aloft.

Undisturbed by gardeners, the grass is growing rampantly in the parks, but at the municipal nurseries in the city, where shells and guns for the front are being made day and night, you can buy blue hydrangeas, yellow marigolds and white stocks.

A shell struck a tree on the bank of the Lebyazha Canal, splintered and twisted the trunk and shattered the branches, but it is determined

to go on living. It has decked itself with small twigs bearing fresh green leaves that look as though they had been varnished. So it lives in spite of all the hazards of war.

In the blocks of houses that have suffered most from the shelling there is the same tenacity of life. The staircase is smashed, the landing has fallen in, but holding on to the hanging girders and the bent iron railings, people climb up to their flats with their parcels, bundles of firewood or sacks. They are in no hurry to move elsewhere. Through the shell-hole in the outer wall you can see inside a room where an old woman is knitting at a table, and a girl curled up on a broken-down sofa with a book.

A department store that has been hit many times looks like a gigantic bee-hive pitted with dark holes. In front of it a smart young militia-woman in immaculate white gloves, standing upright and stern, is directing the traffic. Discipline has been tightened up in the city.

Leningrad's favourite beaches are deserted, no songs float over the islands, no rowing-boats rock on the waves. At a comparatively early hour you will meet scarcely any pedestrians on the long Kirov bridge. Everybody is busy, and all are up to their ears in work.

This is true not only in the factories and offices, at home and on the allotments. Leningrad people are cutting firewood in the suburbs, digging peat and building fortifications.

They work with a will, competing against one another. One gang, made up of women, was short of motor transport for building material they had been collecting. "What do you say, girls, let's carry the logs on our shoulders. O.K.?" said the forewoman.

"Right! But if we carry the stuff and then have to go three miles to dinner, we won't be able to finish the job on time. How about that, girls?"

"But we won't die if we miss our dinner," said the others. "The job has got to be finished when we said. Didn't we give our word we'd get it done on time?"

"We did."

"Well, then, let's go for those logs."

A crowd pours out of the cinema. There are people of all ages, in uniform and in civvies, plainly dressed women and women in their best, but all have an unusually tense expression. You can guess what they have just seen on the screen—the film *Leningrad in Battle*.

A year unparalleled in the history of the city passed before their eyes in uninterrupted sequence. The most varied scenes, the most varied emotions passed before them like a storm during the hour they sat there. Once again these scenes and experiences moved the people

to their depths, because everyone there was watching himself, his dear ones, his own city.

They clenched their fists again, and hatred seethed in their hearts. Many quietly wiped away their tears, many recalled their losses, many were surprised at their own endurance, but all felt the same pride: anyway, we stood up to it! Anyway, we held out! But how difficult it was!

As though in continuation of the film, the air begins to chatter with the dry thudding of the A.A. guns, and an enemy reconnaissance plane dives through the shell-bursts over the heads of the crowd.

It is dropping leaflets, and the pink papers flutter down into the street. Nobody hurries to pick them up. All have known for a long time everything the German murderers can tell them.

An old woman looks up at the sky and says: "If I could only get hold of you, you devil! I'd hang a brick from the bombed houses round your neck and fling you head first into the Neva. That's what I'd do with you, you gangster!"

In the leaflet, the Germans threatened to bury everybody under the ruins of the city.

"You won't scare us," says a Leningrader. "We'll bury you yourselves under your block-houses, before you will us."

Life continues the scenario of the next series of the film. The barrage over the city gets heavier. Leaving a dirty trail of smoke behind him, the German scout makes off. The firing dies down. Darting out from behind the roofs, one of our fighters rushes across the sky with roaring engines, while hundreds of upturned eyes follow it with elation and gratitude.

One early morning, grey torpedo-boats speed noiselessly down the Neva, watched by two little boys on the embankment. These Leningrad boys know all about boats and seamanship, being future sailors themselves.

Nudging one another, they ask significantly: "Did you see them?"

"Of course I did. They're coming back from a scrap. Which do you think has done the best job to-day?"

"That one over there, at the end. She's the best of the lot, must have done a fine bit of work out there to-day. Look at the way she's going along. There's no getting fresh with her."

"Think we shall ever be doing that sort of thing?" said one of the boys, revealing his secret thoughts.

"Why, I should say!" replied his companion. "I've already had a talk with Uncle Mitya, you know, from the base. 'All right,' he said, 'hurry up and get bigger.' Of course we will!"

The boys lower their fishing tackle into the water and with sparkling eyes follow the course of the motor-boats along the river.

A wonderful, clear, sunny day suddenly arrived after a long spell of cold, wet weather. Whole groups of people set out for the island at Zhdanovka like pilgrims visiting a shrine.

In peace-time the place would have been crowded on a morning like this, the trams would have brought more and more, cars would have been drawn up in four rows and there would have been no room to drop a pin in the stands. It is Sports Day in the city that loves all kinds of sport and where the cheering of the fans at a Cup Final drowns the noise of the trams.

Actually, there is no longer a stadium here. All that remains is a low concrete ramp and a huge green field, surrounded by mounds of scrap iron. Nevertheless, there are a few cars on the embankment, a few passengers get out of the trams and go across the little bridge, bicyclists and motor-cyclists come riding up. The finish of an army relay race is nearing the stadium, and the thrill of the contest grips the few spectators.

Almost all of them are in uniform, many of them having come straight from the trenches. A gay variety of colours among the spectators brightens up the sports ground; the judges move busily about the field, one of them, in the uniform of a captain, limping from a wound.

In spite of the small numbers, the spirit of Soviet sportsmanship, the spirit of Leningrad's pluck, dominates the scene. The time will come when the stadium will be fully restored, new stands will be built, new thousands of spectators will come on a day like this, and the names of the victors in new contests will be famous throughout the whole of the Soviet Union.

The thunder of the gun-fire does not cease even at night. The sky is rent with red flashes, dull crashes come from all sides, and the listening Leningraders say to one another: "That's our people!" It means that we are attacking somewhere, and their spirits immediately rise.

The battle is going on quite close, just beyond the city boundaries, and lorries with wounded soldiers drive through the streets. We have had a local success. Journalists are rushing to the active sector. First they pass through a district where a few people are still living, then it gets more and more deserted till there is nothing to be seen but enormous empty houses and almost immediately the road comes under fire. Mines come wailing down and shells burst round the ruins

of an ancient church. Already wounded men are coming back, the blood of fresh wounds soaking through their bandages.

Their faces are serious, and bear an expression of confidence that we will beat the accursed German. A wounded soldier with a bandaged hand stops and says: "The Fritzes will get it hot to-day! They won't half get it!"

The soldiers are keyed-up by the offensive. Pasko, a Red Army man, one of the first to enter the enemy's trenches, grabbed a German N.C.O. The German fought tooth and nail, but Pasko tied him up, brought him back to our lines and said: "Take hold, I can't run around with him. I'm going back to the scrap." And disappeared down the communication trenches.

The horizon is lit up with gunfire. The Germans are counter-attacking without success. Bodies are lying about the road, in the fields and bushes and among the ruins. The battle goes on.

Some German prisoners are sheltering in a building. They have all been captured in hand-to-hand fighting. Their uniforms are torn and dirty, their faces have the stupefied look and bleary eyes of criminals caught in the act.

"You wanted to get into Leningrad. Well, here you are!" someone says to them. They keep their gloomy silence and shuffle their feet.

General Ekkeln threw into the battle all his available reserves, including sappers, air-field personnel, and called up from near Orienbaum an anti-tank division and automatic rifleman. Ober-lieutenant Pausen sent his soldiers over the top, but made tracks for the rear himself.

The Germans were flabbergasted by the weight of our artillery fire and the driving power of our infantry and tanks. They looked with astonishment at our strong, healthy soldiers armed with automatics, and said: "We kept being told all along that we would have an easy job of it here. They said all the people in Leningrad had died off, the place was empty and couldn't resist. And all of a sudden—before we had time to look round—the Russians sprang up everywhere and took us prisoners."

All sorts of loot has been found in their dug-outs, but it is impossible to find out who took it. Every German will say it did not belong to him. To hear them talk, you would think the Hitlerites were at the gates of Leningrad for their health, and pushing south for the sake of the beautiful mountain scenery. They still want to pass themselves off as unwilling tourists, but they are bandits and aggressors by their very nature, and only shells and bullets will tame them.

They do not understand the fury of the Russians. During a night reconnaissance on one sector of our front our men broke into an

enemy trench, and a soldier grappled with a German N.C.O. The German turned out to be a hefty man and scratched, bit, kicked, squealed and struck out with his knife. The Red Army man was slight in comparison, but he got so furious that, seeing no possibility of taking this wild animal alive, he strangled him with his bare hands. There was one Fascist brute less on our earth!

AUGUST

AUGUST is nearly over. A man with the sunburnt, ordinary face of a Soviet civil servant is sitting on a bench in the square, where the yellow dahlias droop their heads in the flower-beds. He has laid aside his newspaper and is watching with his half-closed eyes the crowd going along the broad street. A woman with an enormous bundle sits down on the bench. All kinds of greens are hanging out of it as from a horn of plenty. She has evidently come straight from an allotment and has sat down for a rest after the long walk.

"That's a gigantic dill you've got there," said the man.

"Yes," replied the woman. "The dill has shot up in a most unusual way."

"When it grows as fine and big as that, it hasn't got the same flavour," said the man. "It's overgrown and old."

"You know, I'm not much of a gardener," the woman smiled awkwardly. "But it's good enough for me. Besides, there's plenty of it. I suppose you've got an allotment too?"

"Yes, I have," said the man. "I've sweated a good deal over it, but it wasn't so easy for me with this foot. I couldn't hold the spade in the proper way, couldn't press it down with my foot, so it gave me a lot of extra work. My ground hasn't done too badly, I've got all sorts of stuff growing in it, and lots of it too. It will keep us going through the winter."

"Yes," replied the woman. "A year ago I never dreamed I would ever do any digging and weeding. I was on holiday in the country when the Germans arrived. They arrived somewhat unexpectedly, and we had to get back to town on foot, as there were no trains. I was hurrying along with my sister and her little children, when we ran into troops and guns. The planes were fighting over our heads. Shells were whizzing. On the way we managed to catch a train after all, and then the Germans began to bomb it. We owe a lot to that driver; he didn't lose his head, he managed to get going somehow or other and brought us out safely, but the station was bombed to the ground."

"We saw the villages all on fire as we went along. Oh my God, how they burnt! And how the people suffered from the accursed Germans! It's terrible to think of it. First they killed a man, then they blew some children to pieces with bombs, then they killed some women, till we reached the city, had a good cry and hated the Germans more than ever. When I was back home, I saw my husband off to the front and then I started working. I soon evacuated my sister and her children. Then I sent my son into the army. He's a sniper now. As for myself, I can't tell the days from the nights—I'm always working. When you come home at night, you've got to put out the bombs on the roof. You remember what dreadful things the Germans did in the autumn. After that there was the winter, but what's the good of talking about it? Everybody knows all about it now. February was the worst month for me. The girls in my shift were all dropping out one after the other, and those who were left didn't have a moment's breathing-space. Never mind—we came through. And you? Were you here then?"

"Not exactly," said the man. "I was just outside the town, not far off."

"It's all the same! My friend was killed by a shell in the spring, when the Germans were bombarding the city. And it was such a lovely day, you know, and we'd only just separated. I went home as I was off duty, and then somebody shouted out to me: 'They've killed Daryushka!' I ran out, and there she was, lying covered in blood. There was simply nothing to be done. I felt so wild—you'd hardly believe it; I could have strangled those villains with my own hand. They took her away, and I went down town on business. I cursed the Germans for all I was worth as I went along. I looked up and saw a lot of people standing in a bunch. I thought something was being sold, newspapers perhaps. I went up and there was a man in uniform at the side of the pavement with a woman and an apparatus. Somebody said it was the wireless. I stood and watched. And the man said: 'Citizens, does anyone want to speak to the front? Speak, and they'll hear you there.'

"Nobody budged. Then a man said something very nicely, so I made bold and spoke up: 'Let me say a word or two.'

"If you please, citizenship!"

"I went up to the apparatus, and poured out all my wrath. I spoke as though my son Petya, the sniper, was listening. 'Listen, Petya!' I said. 'The Germans have killed Aunt Darya. You remember her, my best friend. They are monsters. Beat them, darling, beat the skunks till they don't know whether they're coming or going, till their eyes pop out of their heads, so that they won't dare to shell our city. Don't spare them, Petyenka.'

"I poured out all my soul and then went away. And somehow I felt better after that, believe me."

"I believe you, I quite believe you, citizenship," said the man.

"And now just the other day they brought some of the devils along the street. They'd been taken prisoner. People flocked in crowds to look at them. And what repulsive things they were, all heights, skinny, filthy, and such pasty faces!"

She stopped talking and became thoughtful. She was nibbling a stem of sorrel and staring at the ground. Then she shook her head and said: "What a year we've been through! People won't believe us when we talk about it later on. But just see how people still go on walking about, riding in the trams and working. Look at them. See how many girls there are. And doesn't it seem strange with the Germans dug in just outside the city? But I'm pretty certain they'll get it in the neck and have to clear off, and if not they'll be wiped out to the last man. What do you think?"

"That's what I think, too," said the man, as he rolled a cigarette.

The woman suddenly jumped up: "Good heavens, how I've been rambling on. I only meant to sit down for a minute. I must be off. Good-bye, citizen. Sorry I don't know your name. I'll have to run along. . . ."

She went off with the bundle of greens under her arm. The man got up, too, but immediately gave a gasp, sat down again and began rubbing his leg. A lieutenant came along. He was in full battle-dress, Sam Browne, gas mask, revolver and map-case. The only thing missing was a steel-helmet. Altogether, a dashing young man. He sat down, glanced at his watch and looked round him. Apparently he was waiting for someone. The man studied him for a while in silence, then he turned towards him and said quietly: "Excuse me, Comrade Commander, I've been living out of town for the last six weeks, so I'm a little out of touch with things. Tell me, what is the meaning of the little ribbons I see soldiers wearing on the right arm? Some are red and black, some gold. What do they mean?"

The lieutenant looked at his neighbour attentively and replied in a patronizing manner: "They're wound stripes. Red and black means a slight wound, the gold one a serious wound. But why are you interested?"

"Then it's the same as in the last war," said the man, not giving a direct answer to the question.

The lieutenant wanted to repeat the question, but the man turned right round towards him, and he saw in his lapel the Order of the Red Star.

"Then it means that I can wear a gold ribbon," said the man. "But how can I do that on a civilian suit? I think I'll wait a bit."

"Have you been wounded in this war as well?" asked the lieutenant.

"Yes. The Germans have made a mess of my leg. I got a hit from a mortar-shell. It ripped out quite a few pieces, so I can't walk. They gave me special shoes, but I can't get about much. And I can't stand it not being in the army. I'm a captain. I want to get back to a fighting unit, but they won't let me. I've already pestered the Commissar to death. He said to me: 'I'd let you go back, but you must ask the head doctor, and he won't hear of it. Impossible! Impossible! They've given you a disability pension, so you'd better take a rest.'"

"Me rest, when we've got to beat the Germans!" he went on with a bitter smile. "I worked on an allotment. They've given me a quiet job, just as though the war was over. I can't sit still with all the firing going on all around. You understand, comrade lieutenant, it's too early for me to retire. . . . Have you been long in the army?"

The lieutenant replied with slight embarrassment: "Six months."

"I've been in it right from the first day," said the man. "I was in the Finnish war, too. On the Mannerheim Line. We smashed through. That's what they gave me this Star for. I didn't understand the Germans at first. They were enemies and that was all. They got away with it at first because of their equipment, it outmatched ours. But gradually we sized them up. I remember the first time we set one of their tanks on fire, and we hadn't any tank-busters, either. I saw one rushing towards us in the dusk and another one on the right. One of our chaps threw a bundle of grenades, but it fell short; it only peppered the tank with splinters. The tank kept on coming on. And then all of a sudden the whole edge of the forest was lit up. Only later we made out what had happened. It seems we were on an abandoned airfield and the grenades had set fire to a drum of oil. The oil spread over the grass and was burning. Near by there were some heaps of rags and sticks, and I dashed over to them, the men after me. We dragged out some of the rags, saturated them in the oil and then hurled them at the tank. It burst into flames. It stood there and burnt. What was there to be afraid of? We just stood there like dummies. However, it soon got lively; the tankmen started clambering out and ran for it. We finished them off. That's how I got to know how to deal with a tank. The other packed up. So you see, everything was strange to us at first. There were all sorts of problems. Looking back on it, it's only a year ago, and now we're not scared of anything. But I didn't get the measure of the Germans at first, either. Enemies are enemies, but what I didn't realize at once was that they are wild beasts, mortal enemies of mine, and the whole

country. I once went scouting by myself, and crept close up to them. I lay in the bushes. It was evening. I knew the place blindfold. We used to have our summer camps there, and my family lived nearby. I can practically say it is my own native soil. I was lying still, and suddenly I saw a tall, muscular German in a black jacket coming along. He was slashing off the leaves of the bushes with a whip as he walked along, sauntering along just as though he was in his own place. The bastard was walking unarmed about my land, and there was I lying in the bushes as though I didn't exist. It was unbearable, I felt a lump in my throat. I wanted to bash him on the head then and there, but I reflected that though it would certainly be a good thing to bump him off, it was even better to bag him alive. So without more ado I jumped on him. I must have squashed him flatter than a pancake, he didn't even manage to let out a squeak. Then I brought him along and dumped him like a sack at our forward position. And I said to him, though I knew he couldn't understand a word: "Crawl there on your belly, you bastard. I'm going to stroll about on my land, you see, not you."

"And now," he continued with hardly a break, "I can't settle down to an allotment. I realize that allotments are necessary. I know my job is necessary, that the city and the various departments have to be kept in working order, but the main thing is to beat the Germans. That's a thing that can't be put off. . . . How many Germans have you killed, comrade lieutenant?"

"Three since I've started counting," said the lieutenant, blushing like a boy. "I didn't count them before. Of course, there must be a good many more."

"That's not enough!" said the other man sternly. "You've got to kill a German every day, then we'll get rid of them." He looked at his watch and added: "I've been in luck to-day. I was going along the Liteiny Prospect a short while ago and I saw a nine of clubs lying on the pavement. I don't know where it came from. It was all dusty and crumpled and trampled underfoot. Evidently nobody had paid any attention to it. I don't know why, but I couldn't help remembering it. Then I ran into a girl friend of mine, who's in the militia. We had a chat about all sorts of things, and I asked her if she knew what a nine of clubs meant. She laughed and said it meant good luck. And she was right. They rang me up from the Commissariat and told me to come round, as they'd found me a war job. I asked if it was at the front. It was. I ran as though I was on wings, but I needn't have hurried. I haven't to be there for an hour yet, so I sat down to pass the time. You'll forgive me for having spoken to you, I'm sure you'll understand. There isn't a happier man than me to-day. The doctors will fix me up with a proper boot so that I can

get about. I shan't be held up on that account. I'm no good at gardening, but I know how to fight. And I'm going to let the Germans have it. And won't I pay them back for this wound! I'll make it hot for them!"

There are wonderful moonlit nights in Leningrad. A huge, warm, orange moon floats among bluish white clouds in the green, satin sky. The Neva flows in a silver flood between the rose-coloured granite embankments. The sky-line of the tall buildings along the embankment looks like an engraving by a master. The silent ships, like sea ghosts, are almost imponderable in the diffused light.

The gardens, where the anti-aircraft guns are concealed and the men are asleep in the dug-outs, are deserted, majestic in their silence and lavishly painted by the moon. Not a single gun is heard firing, not a sound of a siren anywhere. The sentries pace to and fro silently.

The bridges hanging over the water have no passers-by on them. Passing along streets you have known since childhood, even the ruins of the shattered houses cannot spoil the beauty of the resplendent night. The eye hardly seems to notice the wounds inflicted by the shells. Everywhere it is quiet and flooded with moonlight.

Suddenly a song is wafted through the stillness. A girl is singing it in a soft low voice, probably at an open window in a dark room. It is impossible to make out the words, but that sweet, tender voice sounds peculiarly moving in the night of the vast, battling city.

Who is the girl? A nurse back from duty in a hospital, a worker from a munitions factory, a tram conductress, a signaller, a sniper with scores of dead Germans to her credit? What does it matter? She asserts the right to sing in this lull. She is singing so sincerely and simply, because she has seen everything, been through everything and remained the same lovely Leningrad girl.

And with these light, airy sounds floating through the night, you remember the whole year and especially the month of August when the enemy was battering at the walls of the city. He is now sitting tight in his dug-outs and strong points clutching his automatic or lying beside his machine-gun, and terror grips his disgusting soul, the fear of the inaccessible, formidable city that has sent thousands of his like to their death in the awful thunder of its guns.

What art can take up the task of conveying all that Leningrad has accomplished during these last twelve months, from the day when the railways were blown up, the locomotives halted on the tracks, and the steamers hugged the shores, and all that lay out there beyond the lake became known as the mainland? The city had begun to live a life of siege.

Then it began to beat off one attack after another from the air and from the land. How many people have perished! They died with a gun in their hands, in action. Others died because they were unable to bear the hardships of the winter siege. During the defence of Saragossa the stern, implacable Spaniards used to say: "Those who have died of illness during the siege have also died for the fatherland!" We, too, can repeat their proud words. Our dead are beyond reproach. But our living heroes have surpassed themselves—they have successfully defended the city and they are beating the enemy! They are pounding him day and night. They are shattering the thin web of iron cunning with which he has enmeshed our great city.

The city is seized with a fever of activity that goes on day after day without a break. Already the slogans for the winter have been launched. It is no simple matter to prepare for winter. Soon thousands of Leningraders will once again set about breaking up the wooden houses for fuel, just as they went out in the spring to clear the city of debris and filth.

Children are working on the allotments, old women are on duty at the entrances to the houses, all ages are at their war stations. Civil Defence detachments are marching to their training. A local siren is sounding a test alarm.

And, above all, it is also necessary to root out the slackers and spongers, cut out pilfering, to maintain strict discipline in the city. Very many people have been evacuated, but a great number still remain. Leningrad is still a city with a huge population, who are not just inhabitants but a garrison with its duties, a garrison suffering casualties and fighting the enemy successfully.

New units are marching to the front along the cobbled highway. They have been through a special course of military training and are going into action. They are not novices. They have been picked from the best of those who have been wounded and are now fit again.

The commander of the unit is seeing them off. He is leaning on a stick, as he is lame from a wound. He stays behind to train more soldiers. He gazes down the road till they disappear round a bend. Standing at his side is the commissar, who has also been in a good number of battles. When it is time to go back, the commissar remarks, as though he knew the commander's thoughts: "You remember how we fought last August? You remember the incident in that village on the hill, where we were in a tight hole? One machine-gun and that a cripple. How we got another and made a decent machine-gun

out of a couple of duds? How we wept with rage when the bullets and grenades ran out, and their damned tommy-guns were spraying us to their heart's content? You remember how they bombed us fore and aft? How the tanks came along, and we hadn't got a single armour-piercing gun among us?"

"Well, what about it?" said the captain. "That's a thing of the past. You know what it means when a chap starts recalling the past?"

"I know," said the commissar. "But you saw how they went off just now? Every commander had a sub-machine gun, and the troops were fully equipped with automatics, grenades, mortars, machine-guns, tank-busters, snipers, I wonder what they'll be like when it comes to fighting. Are they going to show that we haven't been wasting our time on them?"

Back at headquarters they sit and wait. Life goes on, sentries are relieved, new companies are trained in the "science of victory," the commissar and the captain pass sleepless nights.

A day passes, then another. It is night once again. The telephone rings. The commissar takes up the receiver. It is impossible to make anything out of his disjointed words, but when he puts the receiver down his face is beaming.

"Well, how's it going at the front?" the captain asks.

"They're making things hum," replies the commissar. "They've broken through, wiped out and captured the enemy's strong point. They didn't go off like stout fellows for nothing. They're fine lads—they've put up a wonderful show.

"Any casualties?"

"Yes, there's no war without losses. But this is a different August, and there'll be a different September after it. That's the stuff!"

SEPTEMBER

It is Leningrad's second autumn of siege. Dark nights, foggy days, and heavy, grey waves on the Neva. Like the city, the Neva lives a double life. It flows between the granite walls of the embankments as in peace-time, and only the hulls of the vessels moored to the banks give it an unusual look. But upstream, beyond the city boundary, the river is no longer the same. Rockets soar into the sky above it, shells explode in its rapid waters, armoured motor-boats race along, scouts steal across it in rowing-boats under cover of a fog to 'bag a tongue'¹ on the German-occupied bank. The roar of gun-fire goes on without a break.

¹ To capture a prisoner for intelligence purposes.

The city, too, is not at all like the city of last autumn. The crowds of people have disappeared, the streets are noticeably emptier. There are fewer trams and cars. The number of ruined buildings has increased since the winter. Last year the people were unprepared for the hardships of winter, but now they are planning ahead for the winter months as for a long and difficult campaign. Everyone knows now what has got to be done to ensure that his house will stand up to the blizzards and severe frosts. They know now how a house can be used in all eventualities as a strong-point of resistance. That is why the Leningraders have set about getting in supplies of fuel, besides building pill-boxes and tank-traps.

Leningrad's wooden houses are disappearing. If you see wooden houses without roofs, walls, floors and ceilings, don't imagine they have been blown down by shells or bombs. They are being intentionally demolished in great numbers, and are disappearing particularly fast in the suburbs. Whole streets are being torn down. The pavements are strewn with metal number plates and the names of streets which will now become waste land. Crowds of Leningraders armed with saws, crowbars and axes are breaking down walls which have stood through a good number of years. There are people who have lived all their lives in the warm and cosy log houses or in the old ugly grey buildings that have been doomed.

The work has to be done accurately. The bricks are piled up separately, the property of absent persons is listed and deposited with the City Soviet; the window-panes are taken out, the door handles are unscrewed, and the metal is placed in a heap by itself. Nothing is allowed to be wasted. The people have already learnt to value every article of scrap iron and every trifle. The population is to move into stone houses, where there are many empty flats.

In this way a great number of people are shifting into other districts. The empty flats liven up and the new tenants are beginning to set the forsaken dwellings in order. The Leningraders are, as it were, closing their ranks. The terrible menace still hangs over the city, but at present everybody is thinking about that other city on a great Russian river, where a furious battle is being fought, where the streets are being destroyed in the fury of the bombs and the flames of the raging fires—Stalingrad.

Hitler has driven to Stalingrad a host of criminals from all over Europe: Spaniards, Danes, Frenchmen, Belgians, Dutchmen, Norwegians and a good many others. There they will pay the full penalty for their criminal lives. Hitler has transferred to Stalingrad the remnants of the divisions that have survived the battles for Sebastopol, reserves from Germany and S.S. men.

Perhaps, being driven to despair in his vain attempts to

capture Stalingrad, the enemy will turn to the stronghold on the Neva and try to take it by storm? Let him try! Leningrad is ready for him.

A low, sandy shore swept by a cold, blustering wind. It is an ancient place, where the ships of Peter the Great used to cast anchor. The rough grass is rusty-looking and strong like wire. The anti-aircraft guns point their barrels to the grey sky, where a German reconnaissance plane is roaming.

Twenty paces from the bank there are some empty, shell-battered town houses. This is the fringe of the city. The dome of Kronstadt cathedral can be seen ahead, and every evening you can see the German batteries firing from the opposite shore of the narrow bay. The shells fly across the sea channel to the port and city. Here also lies the path of the motor-boats, the hunters of the sea, that go out from the city on their missions at sea regardless of the gun-fire, or give the German batteries such a pasting that they fall silent, and seek safety in hide-outs behind the steep embankment.

The work of the anti-aircraft gunners is unassuming and no one has yet described it adequately. They have been at work since the very first days of the war. They have encircled the whole city and its outskirts. They are on the alert day and night. They never take their eyes off the cloudy, autumn sky, and the enemy is well acquainted with their accurate marksmanship. At first sight this uninterrupted, exhausting work may seem to be monotonous, but when you get to know what it has achieved you look with different feelings at the batteries, through which the trams pass in some places, as across a stage, between cases of shells and rain-drenched sentries.

The people, who seem to be ordinary citizens, are not at all ordinary. Each of them has his own score of hatred, his own dead and maimed, a list of sufferings that beggars description. These are not the peaceful, happy-go-lucky inhabitants of a big city, whose days are the usual alternation of work and leisure. They are witnesses of terrible happenings and severe hardships. In appearance they have remained the same as before the war, except that the hair of one may be greyer and the expression on another's face have become hard and stern—but the girls still laugh with the sailors as before, and the children romp about on the sand-heaps.

It is the same with the people at the anti-aircraft guns. In appearance they are all alike in their movements; they carry out orders smartly, they are young and lively. But each of them can tell his story of relations tortured by the Germans, of homes devastated by the enemy, and of the cruel year of hardships. Many have lost their near

ones, and the sight of a German bird of prey wheeling in the sky fills them with a cold rage. Lying over there on the sand beside the dug-out is a round-faced, quiet girl. The wind from the coast is tossing her hair. Have a chat with her. She is the daughter of a fighting family. One of her brothers was killed in action at Minsk, another died an airman's death, her father was severely wounded near Moscow, and she herself has been wounded three times. She has killed six Germans, strangling one of them with her own hands on the battlefield. Her name is Vera Tkachenko. Her life has become a military campaign. In the northern city she remembers the hustle and bustle of gay Odessa, from which she comes, to which there is no return now except by the hard road of struggle.

A tall, well-made young man, whose face looks as if it were cast in bronze, comes into the room. He is a lieutenant, but he has brought some verses. They are verses on the war, written on his knees in a dug-out, and are full of youthful passion. They may not have been given the finishing touches, are not perhaps polished enough, but they have caught the spirit of the Red Army man. When a shell splinter stuck in his breast, he himself tore it out, clenching his teeth so as not to scream with agony. He is from far-off Khakass, and he has long been fighting for the city of Lenin, although he had never seen it before in his life.

When he had been there a little while he walked about the streets with a strange feeling, as though he had been born there and had known it all since his childhood. And when he recites a poem about the tenacity or dash of the Red Army soldier, it is his own qualities he is describing:

This is the way the Red Army man fights:
Piles of enemy bodies before him.
The drum of his automatic is empty . . .
Up springs the delighted foe.

This is the way the Red Army man fights:
Two hand grenades are in his knapsack:
No need to cut off the Fascists' heads!
The vile foe is mingled with the earth.

This is the way the Red Army man fights:
Only a bayonet in his hand:
With a mighty blow he knocks out three!
The fourth?—He has lifted up his hands!

The lieutenant who writes verse in his brief moments of leisure bears the proud name of Georgii Suvorov. He is young, but he has been in enough battles to be called a veteran.

He knows what his native country looks like when the enemy has been driven from it. It is no longer the flourishing land it was before. In the roar of explosions, the dark stretches of smoke screens and the black clouds of bombing attacks, we win back a ravaged land, where only chimney stacks and scorched walls jut out of the ground and the burnt grass is mingled with clods of earth, but where the German bodies lying about on all sides are a satisfying sight. There are many of them, and that means that the enemy has been bled white on this sector and is retreating. In these battles the Soviet people are renewing their youth, and new voices of song and verse are being born.

Laying aside his pencil, the poet takes up his automatic. No matter if he still writes a little clumsily. He fights with precision, with confidence, with passion, as the Germans know to their cost.

Evstafiev, an engineer attached to an engineering office, is by category a civilian. His job is to produce designs, and if he invents a new gun, then it is the business of the military to tell him if it is any good. But he is a Leningrader. He and engineer Radkevich, who has been working with him, take their gun and set out for the front lines, especially as it is not far from the office where the fresh blueprints are lying. At a forward position the two men themselves put their invention to the test. They do not need an experimental range. They try out their gun on the enemy's hide, then work out any adjustments necessary for its use and go back to their office.

Never before has there been a fortress with such an enormous garrison as Leningrad. The enemy is not without good reasons for threatening it with all sorts of terrors in his impotent rage, even declaring that he will try to wipe it off the face of the earth. It is easy to write this in a miserable German newspaper, but so long as there are the men and women of Leningrad the city is impregnable.

Its people fear neither the winter, nor assaults, nor bombings. They are not a superstitious people, but they have their omens. Last autumn, which was dry, cold and foreboding, the green leaves fell in whole bunches and covered the ground. The people said it meant great hardships and great losses.

September is now drawing to an end. The evenings are calm and mild. The gardens are as green as in August. Here and there the first few yellow leaves have only just appeared. The Leningraders say this is a good sign.

But they are confident and cheerful even without omens. In little

over a month's time they will celebrate October 25th in their city, which is called the cradle of the Revolution.

And although they will not celebrate this great anniversary in the glitter of lights and festivities but in hard front-line work, battles and the state of siege, they are holding high the great flag which was first hoisted in their city on that day in October. They will keep it flying with even greater firmness and raise it higher still into the night illuminated by the flashes of the ferocious battle.

OCTOBER

THE whole sky is overcast with heavy woolly clouds. In the autumn twilight the slanting rain pours down while a warm west wind drives the waters of the Neva back from the sea. Lit up by the lamps of the passing cars, the water in the canals seems swollen; here and there on the outskirts it swirls on a level with the banks. The dull sound of gun-fire comes from beyond this misty, sodden dusk. The wind from the Baltic tears at the shutters, rattles the broken window-panes, and drives before it the wet leaves in the parks, sweeping them into heaps. The drawbridges have raised their black walls, and phantom ships glide imperceptibly through the mists of the Neva. The greenish flashes of the tramways and the reddish flashes of gun-fire light up a sea of wet roofs, chimneys, distant cupolas and spires as if it were dawn.

"Are we going to have another flood like the one in 'twenty-four?" the Leningrader wonders, as he makes his way home from work. It is a familiar path he follows through the streets and along the embankment, knowing all the shell holes in the darkness, and skirting the dumps of beams and boards lying in readiness to make new strong-points or to be used for fuel.

A grey morning comes, and suddenly a slanting sunbeam pierces the clouds. The city brightens up and takes on the clear outline one is accustomed to. No one prophesies any floods although the river is high. The wind is already blowing from Lake Ladoga, and it is not only a chill, sharp wind, but it is also a wind that brings fresh news. The whole city is talking about the Germans' attempt to land on an island in Lake Ladoga, and how they were beaten off and annihilated, the whole lot being sent to the bottom.

It is night once again, with drenching rain, and Leningrad listens to the downpour and wonders how things are going with the sentries at the front who never close their eyes, with the sailors-on patrol plunging in their motor boats through the dark waves, with the pilots scorning the night and the dirty weather.

Autumn has come to Leningrad. Autumn has brought new cares. People have got to think about storing vegetables and getting in their supplies of firewood for the winter, about the heating of the houses, the sweeping of the chimneys and repairs to air-raid shelters, roofs and stairs. They have to prepare for the great November anniversary and get ready their gifts for the front, the school children and the smaller kiddies.

In this big building you meet army men on all the stairs. Soldiers and commanders arrive in lorries and cars from the front lines. They come here, taking off their soaked caps and shaking the rain off their greatcoats. But you meet civilians here, too, quite a number of them. Sitting at long tables over a frugal supper are men in jackets for the most part, with faces satisfied and gay as if they were at a magnificent banquet. As a matter of fact, this is a banquet, a feast even, though these words are associated with something gay and noisy, with an oriental profusion of food and drink. There is nothing of that here, but there are songs and ardent speeches, short and to the point. This is a plumbers' feast.

The Frunze district has won the Banner of Honour, taken first place in the drive to get houses ready for the winter. Its plumbers have become the foremost people of the city. It had been no easy task to restore the water-supply but they had fixed their district before all the rest. It was a long, stubborn battle for water, in which ordinary housewives, divided into gangs, cut pipes and carried the material. There were not enough plumbers for the job, but they worked as the Russian knows how to work.

The simplest words and concepts have now taken on a new significance. Who previously attached any importance to such ordinary and tedious words as heating, water, light? Such things were taken for granted in this great city. If the water system got out of order they called in the plumber. If the light went out, they called in the electrician. As for firewood, they got it sent from the stores. Now there are not enough people or material. You have now got to lay in your firewood yourself by breaking up an old wooden house, so as to have a warm home. Now you have got to learn in double-quick time how to mend the water pipes and clean the flues, and how to make an economical oil lamp in case there is no electricity.

So the housewives went to the plumbers to learn the job. Girls with sooty cheeks, laughing merrily, cleared bucketfuls of soot from the flues. Barrowloads of boards and beams from the demolished houses are dragged along the streets. And from a loud-speaker comes the voice of the announcer speaking about the importance of individual

houses in fighting for an inhabited centre. The people who are carting firewood stop and listen to the talk on street fighting and the new importance of roofs in their city life in the second year of the blockade.

This is why the plumbers of the Frunze district are feasting, making spirited speeches and singing songs like conquerors. And if Vitya Kuropata, a youngster who acted as runner for the A.R.P., won fame during the incessant air-raids of last winter, became famous, this year fourteen-year-old Vitya Fiodorov has shown himself to be an expert plumber by fixing up the water supply in three big houses.

They are little more than children. But these children of Leningrad never sat about doing nothing. They worked in civil defence, extinguished fire-bombs, cleared up debris, acted as messengers and distributed letters. Then they worked on the allotments, and now in the autumn they have been helping to harvest the vegetables. They came to the factories and took their places at the benches. When a delegate from the front arrived to speak at a certain factory, he was utterly at a loss when he saw all these serious little people gathered round him. He liked their business-like manner and look of concentration and said with a smile: "See what a working class we've got now! Real chips of the old block!" And when he was told all they had been turning out for the front, he was astonished and deeply touched.

Many schoolchildren have gone back to school and taken up their regular studies. No matter if there are sometimes not enough text-books and exercise-books, ink-pots and pens to go round. By pooling what there is they manage perfectly well.

Orphans are looked after in children's homes, as are the motherless children whose fathers are at the front. It often happens that a soldier will rush up to the children when they are out for their walk, and snatch a girl or boy into his arms. Then they break ranks and the big Red Army man with his gas-mask and weapons slung all over him will squat on his heels and find himself unable to answer all the questions that are fired at him at once. He puts his son or daughter on his shoulder and walks with the teacher at the head of the chattering file of children along the bank of the Neva or in the park, where the allotments stretch on both sides of the path.

Units of the Army and Navy often adopt a children's home. Weather-beaten, sunburnt sailors of the Baltic Fleet, who have just put in from sea, come into the warm, bright rooms, where toys and building blocks lie scattered over the carpets. The children ply them with questions and they answer as if they were speaking to grown-ups,

doing everything to satisfy the eager desire for knowledge among these tiny people who have been through so much, among whom some have even been wounded and shell-shocked.

In one of these homes, when the children learnt that the soldiers and commanders of an armoured train wanted to take it under their care, the whole little community set about producing a wall newspaper. A big, formidable armoured train, accurately drawn by a young artist, was immediately forthcoming. Thick smoke belched from its funnel, flames spurted from its guns, and a flag with a red star waved over its turrets. The children also composed a letter, which ran: 'Dear soldiers! We have learnt with great joy that you are adopting us. Our fathers, mothers and brothers have also been defending our native city. Beat the enemy mercilessly for the sake of our fathers, mothers, sisters and brothers who have died. In your honour we have named our wall newspaper *The Armoured Train*. Come and visit us and see how we live and how we are studying. We are waiting for you impatiently.'

The children of Leningrad, who have suffered the loss of their near ones, seen the destruction of their homes and been through weeks of cold and hunger, have not become gloomy and sullen. They are surrounded with devotion and affection. The privation of the siege has only served to strengthen their sense of comradeship and the understanding that they must all help one another. They will grow up to be good citizens and patriots. They hate the Germans with their whole heart and soul. They are very self-reliant. They find no difficulty in making a journey on foot ten streets away to carry a message for some sick neighbour or friend. They are not afraid of the dark nor of shelling and bombing. They know the names of all the ships in the Neva and are familiar with every detail of the daily routine on board a warship.

Books are in great demand in Leningrad. The paraffin-lamp-lit counters in the State Publishing House bookshop, the second-hand book stalls on the Volodarski Prospect, the book and pamphlet stands all along the 25th October Prospect, are always surrounded by curious and interested crowds. The bookshops are full of buyers. The men coming from the front are eager for books.

In one division a Walter Scott novel was passed from hand to hand for over a month. It was read by the Divisional Commander, then by everybody at headquarters, and after that it passed from the signallers to the regiments, and there in the dug-outs a soldier back from some night patrol would re-live the stirring events of a bygone age, so skilfully revived by the old English wizard of the pen. There

is no need to say how eagerly every new book is looked forward to, how everyone wants to get a copy and with what triumph a man will carry it about in his pack.

The men at headquarters, tired out with sleepless nights, read Maupassant and Dumas for the tenth time with pleasure. The Sunday entertainments arranged by the Arts Committee are given to a packed hall. Verses and new stories are read, new concerts given and new songs sung. When the first number of the journal *Leningrad* was published, queues immediately lined up to buy it. The number printed was insufficient, and it was sold out in a few days. A book published in Moscow is a rarity here. There are few Moscow papers and it is rarely they can be bought on the street stands.

Books on the history and theory of warfare are much sought after, as are the biographies of Suvorov, Kutuzov and Bagration. People ask for books on the last war, and in old papers you suddenly come across pictures that seem to have been drawn to-day. Turning over the pages of the periodical *Lukomorye*, you find a caricature depicting the Germans' idea of the world. In the middle of the universe is a fortress with thick walls, behind which fat, swinish-looking men sit playing cards, while they drink beer out of enormous tankards. On all the towers of the fortress stand machine-gunners and artillerymen with guns trained on all the nations who are working for the idle 'conquerors of the world—the Hanses and their Gretchens.' All the peoples of Asia, Africa, America, Europe and Australia are toiling under the whip of a German in cap and breeches with a cigar in his mouth. Over all this sits, like the incarnation of power, a gaunt and horrible German Junker with a monocle—a super-man, curling his lips contemptuously.

Or another cartoon: an enormous hog with the German coat-of-arms on its rump is squatting on a globe of the world, as the personification of German imperialism. And photographs show Belgian women and girls being taken away to Germany for compulsory labour, gallows at Kalish, devastated villages in Serbia, Russian soldiers with their ears and noses cut off. . . . Yes, in the old papers there are things to be seen we are very familiar with to-day!

The Leningraders, whether at the front or in the rear, are fond of books, both old and new, and even life under the blockade has not quenched this passion of theirs.

Three smart-looking, freshly shaven soldiers are walking along the street. Two sailors are coming towards them. In addition to the black and gold ribbon round their caps, they have streamers reaching below their shoulders. The ribbons gleam with gold in the dull light of the

autumn day, and not having seen anything of the sort before, the soldiers ask the sailors what unit they belong to.

"The Naval Guards," they reply.

"So that's what you are—Guardsmen! Well, we're Guardsmen, too!" exclaim the soldiers, looking understandingly at the sailors.

The Leningrad Guards! This great name is now borne by the soldiers, commanders and political workers of Krasnov's Guards Division. They have deserved this proud, responsible name. The enemy has many times experienced their ruthless attack. Many times they have defeated the Germans in the distant outskirts of the city and on the banks of the Neva, where Russia's first Guards regiments—the young 'pioneer' regiments of Peter the Great—fought some two hundred years ago. The soldiers of this division are well-known in Leningrad. They were delighted when they learnt that they were to be given the title of Guards. The wounded soldiers in the city hospitals wrote fiery letters to their division, congratulating their comrades in arms.

There was one event that overshadowed these rejoicings. The beloved commissar of the division, Georgii Zhurba, the bravest of the brave, died of wounds. The Colonel came to see him for the last time. It seemed impossible to Krasnov that his friend, who had been in so many battles and had always been the first to go into the attack and the last to give over, should be lying unconscious. Krasnov bent down and gently touched him. Zhurba opened his eyes, summoned all his remaining strength, stared at Krasnov and said quietly: "Tolya," and then: "So this is the end." He seemed to want to say in these few last words that the battles and campaigns were over and that he had done his duty to the last. Beyond the window stood the sombre trees of autumn; the drone of an engine came from behind the clouds and the sound of occasional distant firing. Zhurba was a thorough Leningrader. He was a foreman in the 'Krasny Trugolnik' factory before he volunteered for the People's Militia, where he soon amazed everybody by his cool-headed bravery and endurance. In his very first engagement he captured a village from the Germans with a handful of men. And when the Germans took to their heels, he said in a quiet, satisfied manner: "Well, boys, now you've seen how the Jerries run. My word, the soles of their boots are actually smoking."

He was a born fighter, a bold and purposeful Russian. He was bone of the bone of the workers who made up the regiments which defeated Yudenitch. The men of his division loved their strong, just and valiant commissar. When he was wounded and collapsed, a young lieutenant wanted to pick him up and take him away from under fire. But enemy planes came over and began to bomb. The earth flew up in black pillars. The lieutenant lay down and covered the commissar

with his body. Later on they carried him away quietly and carefully under very heavy fire. But his wound was so severe that even his strong constitution succumbed.

They buried him on a dull Leningrad day with all the honours due to such a hero. The soldiers and commanders vowed they would avenge him. Zhurba did not live to see the day when his Division was decorated. But he was a real Guardsman, and his name still inspires the men in battle as he himself did a good many times. Tears gleamed for the first time on the stern face of Colonel Krasnov when he bade farewell to his comrade-in-arms. And in the ranks the eyes of the men of the famous Division were heavy with grief. . . . Leningrad's son gave his life for his native city, and the enemy will pay dearly for that loss! The iron rhythm of the Guardsmen's determination is heard in the even step of their marching ranks. The concentrated look on their stern faces speaks of their promise of vengeance. And the promise will be carried out!

NOVEMBER

THE roofs and streets are covered with snow, and the ice floes on the Neva have frozen solid. The river has been halted and now forms a scaly grey field. The way is barred to the tugs and steamers. The trees seemed to have been etched in black ink. This is the second winter of the blockade. The Leningraders are carting home their firewood on sledges. Women with their heads wrapped in shawls clear away the snow in the mornings. There are thin patterns of ice on the window panes. At the least hint of warmth in the breeze the pavements are covered with a sticky mud and the Neva thaws—the gaps in the ice shine with a leaden glint.

The open windows in the dwellings look strange. The tenants have gone away to work, living in barracks and not returning home for weeks on end. The old ruins, to which the eye has grown accustomed, no longer attract the attention of the passers-by.

Leningrad is always gloomy in November. The days are dark and sullen. In peace time when the shop windows were lit up at an early hour, lights shone in the windows of the houses, the bustling streets were filled with clatter and hubbub, and the innumerable trams and automobiles added to the noise, the early dusks were not so noticeable. In any case they were something usual, like the fogs of London. Now these misty cold evenings have a peculiar significance.

If the chronicle of the city were to be written day by day, November would not appear to be very much different from October; a mono-

tonous autumn takes the place of a monotonous summer, and even the war does not produce any particularly tragic impressions. In reality, however, this is not so. As the recruit at the front becomes a veteran, is proud of his wounds and scars and the heroic deeds of his comrades and is absorbed in the life of the army in the field, so the inhabitants of Leningrad have become absorbed in their unusual daily work. The life of each one of them would make a very different story. Some day thousands of diaries will lie on the historian's table, and then we shall see how much there was that was remarkable in the unremarkable biographies of simple Russian people.

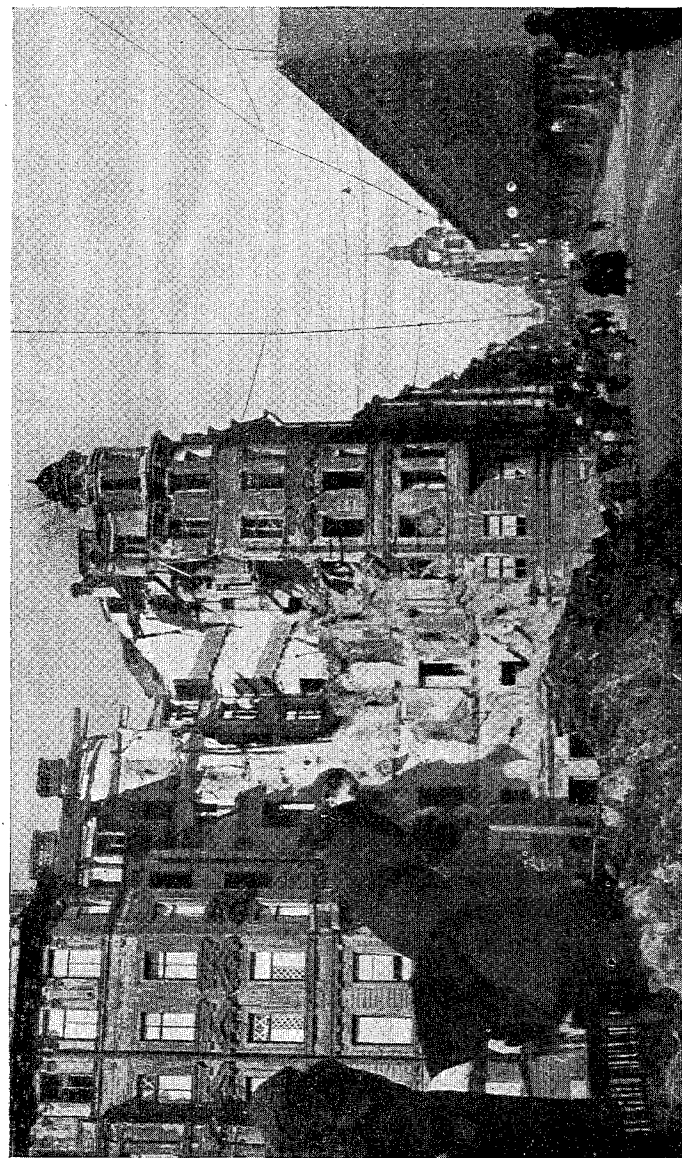
How touching was the mutual consideration that sprang into being in the first year of the war, amid the darkness and cold! And it has remained to this day. A professor chops wood for a sick charwoman and gives her a part of his rations. Somebody says to a postman: "How is it I've not had any letters for a long time? You're not losing them?" The indignant postman replies: "What are you talking about! How can anybody lose letters these days? It's our men who are writing them from the front, we realize that well enough." A little girl coming home from school is unable to reach the door bell. By agreement with the people on the lower floor, she rings their bell and then they let her people know. Would anybody have bothered about the little neighbour at any other time? But now people realize.

And the citizens understand. They have become politically more mature. Their daily contact with the soldiers and commanders from the front, with relations and acquaintances, has turned them all into one big family. When good news arrives of promotion or decoration, in which relations are concerned, people express their pleasure unrestrainedly. But when it is bad news, news of a death, they go into the next room so that the guest shall not see their grief.

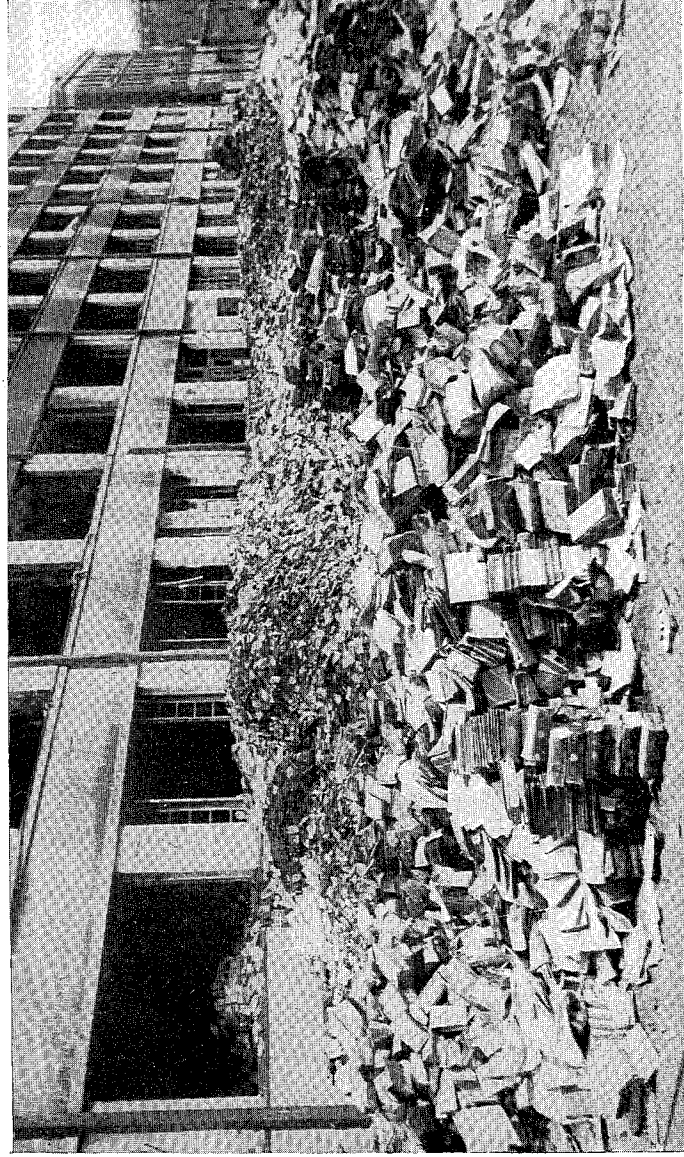
The Leningraders have always had a strong collective spirit, and the approach of the anniversary of the Great October Revolution made itself felt long before the day itself. It was pleasant to say: the October Revolution began in our city. To-day the whole country is thinking of Leningrad, it cannot help but do so.

The workers who made the October Revolution have joined the army as the living witnesses of the events of twenty-five years ago. Their reminiscences have acquired a new force, and a special pride rings in the words: "I remember how we took the Winter Palace. I saw Lenin himself. I was sentry at the Smolny Institute. It all began with us, with the people of Petrograd, in these very streets. . . ."

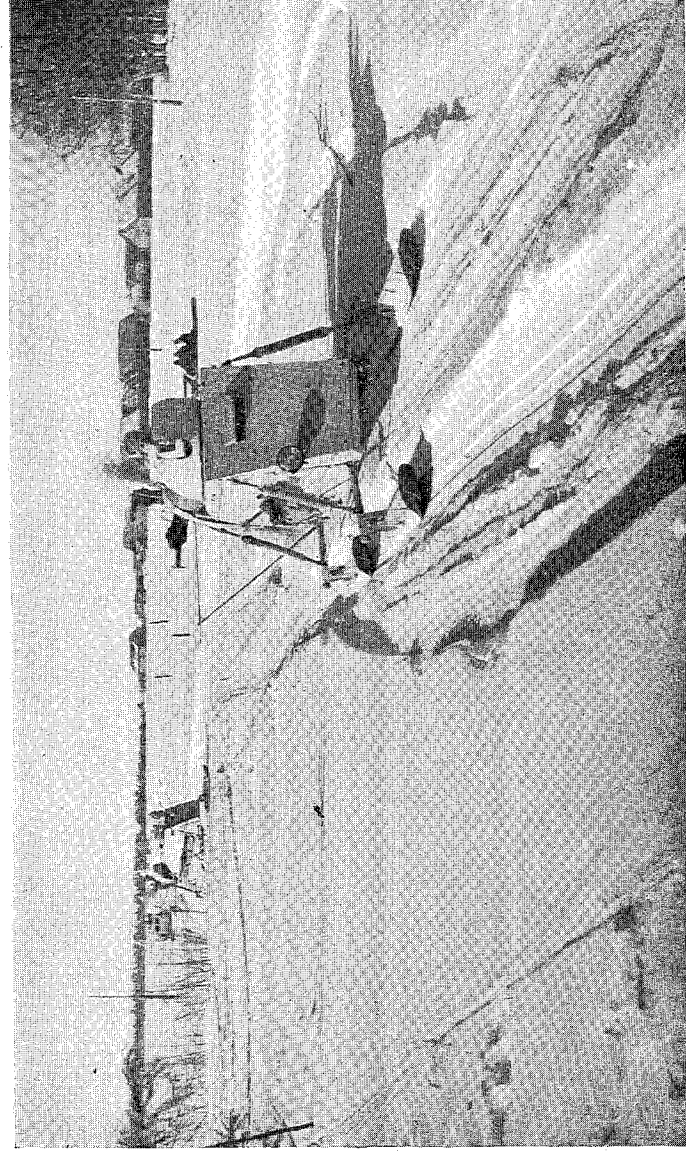
They have hoisted the glorious old banner of the Petrograd Soviet, which was handed over to the city together with the Order of the



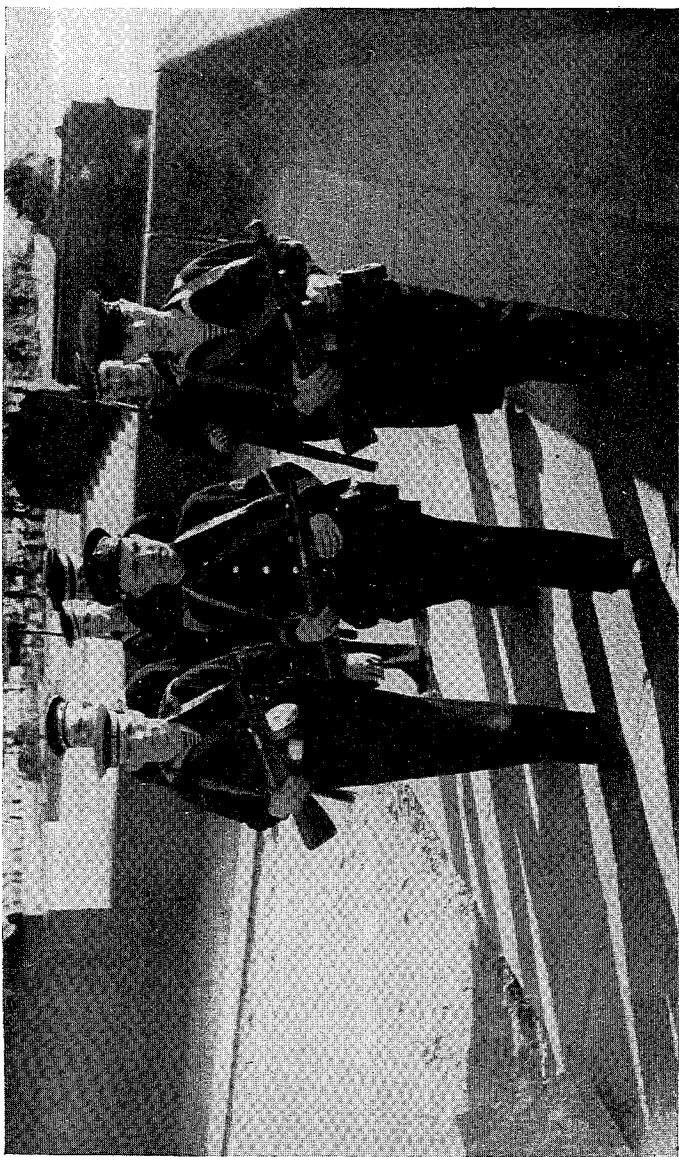
A Building Destroyed by Shell-fire



The Knizhnaya Palata, one of Leningrad's Biggest Libraries, Destroyed in the Bombardment



Aero-sledges Going into Action



Red Navy Men Patrolling the Neva Embankment

Red Banner for its heroic defence in 1917. M. I. Kalinin, who said at the ceremony: "In presenting you with this Red Banner, I may say with all confidence to the workers and peasants of our country that the Petersburg workers, steeled in struggle, will never surrender it. They are accustomed to capturing banners, not to giving them up."

This same banner was brought to a meeting of one of the military units, and the soldiers took an oath under its folds to defend the city of the Revolution and to smash the enemy. Old Petersburg working men and women gazed eagerly and with affection at the faces of the young men who filed past the flag. They were fine young fellows with sunburnt, weather-beaten faces, who had learnt in long battles how to thrash the Germans. They marched with their rifles at the slope and with a firm even step. Their uniforms were nothing much, their greatcoats were threadbare and their boots worn, but they were real front-line soldiers marching past.

The war has become the very life of the city. People had already begun to remember what happened last year and thought that the Germans would probably start dropping bombs again just before the anniversary out of sheer malice. And, in fact, the air-raids began again. The bombs fell with their usual screaming and hissing on to the dwelling-houses, the open spaces and into the water. The flying bandits were in a hurry and did not trouble about aiming at anything in particular. The Leningraders quickly cleared up the ruins, bustling about in silence and with a stubborn perseverance, like ants in an ant-heap. There were more wounded people in the hospitals, fresh orphans in the children's homes, the railings on the Anichkov Bridge were of a different design, new ruins appeared here and there—and that was all. Nobody was intimidated by it. The anniversary turned out to be a holiday, a feast-day with an unexpected gift: electric light was switched on to all the flats in the city. For two days the Leningraders were able to sit down to their humble festivities with the electric light turned on.

They listened to Stalin's speech in a different spirit from that of last year, when everything was strained to the limit. The enemy was approaching Moscow, people were in a gloomy mood, and the words of their leader brought courage to their anxious hearts. Now they listened with cheerful expectation and confidence in victory. The myth of the enemy's invincibility was already a thing of the past, the winter no longer frightened anybody with the unknown, there were no insuperable difficulties, no apprehension and tense expectation. "There will be celebrations in our streets," said Stalin. And everybody echoed his words.

Red flags fluttered on the houses. The cinemas and theatres were crowded. It was strange to think that a few miles away the Germans

were sitting in their dug-outs and strong-points and peering into the mist behind which lay the impregnable city, where people were going to the theatre, riding in the trams to work and even paying visits. Shells fell in the darkness. "That's a couple of streets away," said the host calmly to his visitor and went on with the conversation. People bought antiques in the shops and gave presents to one another.

In the hall where a quarter of a century ago Lenin had stood on the platform and proclaimed a new era in the life of Russia, a speaker's words rang out, and the audience enthusiastically cheered the speech of the chief of the Leningrad Defence Committee, A. Zhdanov. The fact that this was the same historic hall with the broad columns, bathed in light and filled with the representatives of the city, the army and the navy, and that words which had once been spoken there were now repeated, was something never to be forgotten. It touched the very depths of their heart and moved them to tears.

People felt as if they would walk out of this splendid hall and see the city all lit up, crowds of people in their holiday finery, dances in the squares and unrestrained merriment everywhere. But the people went out into the blackout and took their separate ways to their duties and urgent, uninterrupted work. There was no unrestrained merriment, but there was a tranquil confidence in the future, in their own strength, in the might of the great Bolshevik Party, and in the fact that they would conquer, that they could not fail to conquer.

Meetings were held everywhere, speeches were made and reminiscences exchanged. A clear vision of the militant past, which the city was now living through in another form, rose up before the young soldiers who had come from the remotest ends of the country. "We will never give up the conquests of the October Revolution!" said the delegates from the front when talking about the fighting out there. A patrol asked a group of Red Army men why they were loitering so long on one spot in the square in front of the Palace.

"Wait a bit, chums," the Red Army men replied. "You see, we don't come from these parts. We've got to see where everything took place in the Revolution. We're defending the city, but we don't know it. We're seeing it for the first time."

"Ah, well, that's different. Look your fill and remember it all your life," said the patrolmen.

It was during these days that the Guards banner was handed to a famous division. The regiments stood at ease, whilst Comrade Zhdanov made a speech. It was quiet and solemn all round. The firing of the anti-aircraft guns had only just ceased after driving off some inquisitive German planes. Zhdanov spoke of the qualities of a Guardsman, the high honour of fighting in the front ranks, the

obligations and duties of the units of the Guards. The words of the Guards' oath resounded from the ranks. Colonel Krasnov, a fair-moustached, tall, tough soldier, recalled the great deeds of the division: the battles on the Isthmus, the march across the icy wastes of the Gulf to outflank Vyborg, and then the course of the great national war when the division, first in the whole Red Army, halted the Germans, routed the crack S.S. units and drove them through the mud beyond Soltzy.

The Guardsmen had only one anxiety, and that was: when were they going to attack once again? The Germans had got to be driven away from Leningrad. It was time! They had stayed too long around the city. This is what they are saying not only in the division but in the whole army; and so said all Leningrad, too.

And suddenly, when day had followed day filled with the bustle of all-out work, a single word rang through the whole city. The first news of it came so unexpectedly that it almost seemed to have been born of the sheer desire of the people.

Our turn will come! And here it was, like a spring day in winter, the pealing of invisible bells, the rumbling of a storm in a gloomy sky. Victory at Stalingrad! At the last moment! What could be more joyful than this news? The city was agog, and strangers talked to each other like old friends. "They've beaten the Germans!" old men exclaimed, interrupting one another. Many people wept for joy as they listened to the broadcasts.

"They were fond of encirclements," said some. "Now they've got a taste of it themselves!" "And the prisoners, the prisoners!" exclaimed others. "More than fifty thousand!" "How are they going to feed them, the heathens, such a swarm of them?" muttered an old woman. "Never mind, Granny," shouted her grandson, "we've captured more than a thousand guns, and look at the booty! More machines and stores than you can count! That's the stuff!" Everyone, old and young, were beside themselves with joy.

"But when are we going to begin?" the soldiers asked one another. "Stalin knows when. Don't be in a hurry. He'll say the time and place, when it's our turn. Go on with your training and get ready. Be on the alert, and our time will come," said the commanders to those who were impatient.

The whole city discussed nothing but the news from the Stalingrad front. And like a sign of great victories a bright rainbow suddenly appeared over the wintry city. Its shimmering, glowing ends melted into the horizon, and it stood like a wonderful archway leading into the future. A rainbow on a November day in Leningrad! Nobody

remembers anything like it. "You'll see," say the Leningraders. "It's a sign of a greater victory than there has ever been before."

And, indeed, the rainbow was unusual and impressive. It stood over the city, and then one of its ends began to fade, as though going to the far-off steppe that was rumbling with the defeat of the Germans, to stand over our troops and, stretching over the whole great country, unite the two warrior cities. Let the learned explain this amazing phenomenon later on. The people have already explained it like this: the time has come for us to pass through the gates of military glory. Our turn is coming.

DECEMBER

GLOOM and fog. At one moment one's feet splash into puddles, the next they slip on the icy pavement. The yellow lights of the cars shine dimly in the fog. Water drips from the roofs, just as in April. The muffled bass note of a tug comes from the river. A warm wind from the sea bends the bare black branches of the trees. It is December in Leningrad.

This time last year the birds were freezing to death on the wing, but now you can walk about Leningrad without an overcoat, as if you were at Tiflis. A woman with a kerchief on her head angrily mutters as she plods through the puddles: "Here's another load of trouble for us. Who organized this?" She is so accustomed to everything being organized in Leningrad that she regards this new inconvenience as due to somebody's slackness. But the old sailors in oilskins, puffing and blowing as they pace the bridges of their steamers and set out on the difficult task of navigating through the ice on Lake Ladoga, have also something to say that is not very flattering to the god of the lake.

It is already the seventeenth month of the blockade. The days are the darkest and shortest of the year. The evening comes so soon that the stars seem never to disappear from the sky and only hide for a while behind the low-hanging clouds. This makes the city even more gloomy and fantastic. One is reminded of the poetry of Alexander Blok which was inspired by mists of this sort, when the city suddenly vanishes or appears in the fantastic light of an occasional headlamp. Lit up by a pedestrian's torch, a house with columns rises up in the dark, a typical Leningrad house in which the Queen of Spades might have lived. The hooves of a horse patrol echo. The radio is broadcasting a Beethoven symphony. Distant searchlights roam in yellow

flashes over the roofs, and suddenly a tank scrunches along like a stray steel beast, wet, heavy and new, on its way to the front.

How can one forget that the front is not far away, also wrapped in the fog, saturated, with flooded trenches, damp dug-outs, perpetual skirmishes and bombardments? No, the Leningraders never forget that. They never forget it because their whole life is devoted to a single aim: to work for the front.

Life goes on, and it is like a book; a book that is ruthless, graphic, and painfully realistic. It is made up of the strangest variety of things. You go into the workshop of an enormous factory, and see an extraordinary scene. If you look carefully in this busy workshop, where the sparks splash in the semi-darkness, you will be able to make out little heads bending intently over the benches. What concentration in their eyes, what skill in their quick little hands, what unchildlike calm in their hearts! They will solemnly show you endless rows of automatic rifles, newly made, shining and ready for battle, which will belch out a deluge of death and annihilate fresh thousands of the great city's enemies.

Turn over the page of the book and you will see dirty, stumbling figures creeping in the melting snowdrifts and meekly holding up their hands when their road is barred by tanks. Our Red Army men see men with swarthy faces begrimed with mud and smoke, with torn striped blankets on their shoulders, wind-whipped weeping eyes and trembling hands lifted above their heads. They understand neither Russian nor German—they are Spanish deserters from the remnants of the Blue Division, who have escaped from the monstrous camp set up just outside Leningrad. All the ruffians of Europe were crouching there in the wet, blowing on their numbed fingers and looking like drenched, starving, mangy wolves, watching and waiting in front of a human dwelling.

On the opposite page is a tiger from the Leningrad Zoo—a noble and beautiful animal. There is no other tiger like it in the world. It has become a vegetarian. It eats vegetable soup and lies for hours wondering why it has never before eaten such a strange and appetizing dish. What strange times are these, when tigers become vegetarians, and for the second year a camp of bestial cannibals is stationed before the great city? These cannibals rush to their guns and begin to shell the city furiously, as though they wanted to wipe it off the face of the earth in a few hours.

It is a sad spectacle. The shells scream, whine, hum and wail through the streets, landing in a cellar, penetrating the roof of a house, shattering the walls of a third storey, striking the asphalt, the tram-lines, the trees. The streets are deserted, showers of broken glass rain down everywhere, shattered bricks whistle through the air,

window-frames fly out, and here and there the dim light of a fire gleams.

In December the shelling of the city sometimes went on for two hours and a half. It was stubborn, frightful, senseless. Shells landed in front of a theatre, where everybody heard the roar of the explosions. But the theatre lives a life of its own, and the artists, listening involuntarily to the explosions, merely carried on and played their parts with greater intensity, while the spectators followed the action with undivided attention. They had come to the theatre for recreation and would not be put off by the exploding of a shell nearby.

The artists in the theatre were at their battle stations just in the same way as the girl typist who seemed to have nothing to do with guns and planes. She was sitting tapping out a document and just as she got to a comma a red flash blotted out the room in front of her. When the smoke cleared, she was still sitting there, with her hand on the keys and a shell splinter through her head. She died at her post. Another typist soon took her place and carried on the work. The change-over was like the changing of sentries.

Some architects went to inspect the damage done to a house in a recent German bombardment. They found that the building could be repaired. On their way back, fresh shells began to hum overhead. A few minutes later they separated at the corner of the street. The next shell killed an old architect, as though it had been aimed at him for defeating the barbarism of the bombardment by his work. But all the same, to-morrow other architects will carry on the work.

Powerless to capture the city, the enemy is driven to a frenzy of rage. He fails to realize that every inhabitant looks on his house as a warship, in which he has his regular duties. And as a sailor keeps his ship spick and span, carries coal for his boilers, and keeps his watches on deck, so the Leningrader, although there is no surging sea around him, but now for the second year quiet shores of granite and the snowy lines of the houses on the embankment, devotes himself to the daily routine as though he were in the strictest service.

The city has a slogan, unusual under siege conditions but quite in keeping with the times and profoundly Soviet: "Love for your home!" There are even wardrooms in this enormous battleship Leningrad. "Red Corners" have been arranged in the air-raid shelters, places where people can meet who have some time on their hands, perhaps just to have a chat, or to iron the washing or listen to a lecture on the international situation.

Upstairs in his flat someone carefully tries the switch and—oh, miracle!—the little electric lamp lights up, and this soft even glow

drives away the nightmare of last year, with its hunger and darkness. The lamp in the Leningrader's flat is a victory that has been gained by inventiveness and perseverance. This is no ordinary lamp such as burns in any town in any country. Some day the world will know how inventive and persistent the man of Leningrad has been in his researches, what discoveries he has made and how he has used them like some new weapon for his defence.

The slogan 'Love for your home' implies another: 'Concern for the individual.' For this purpose, in Leningrad they have created a new type of social worker—the political house-organizer. This is someone who is a sort of plenipotentiary for each house. He replaces the house superintendent if he leaves the tenants without water and light; helps in all domestic matters. He deals with the question of getting in the firewood or the best way of taking a sick neighbour to the hospital.

It seems to the Leningraders who have lived through the whole period of the blockade that they have not changed, that they are the same as they were in peace time. No, they have changed, as a man changes who has made a dangerous journey, overcoming all sorts of obstacles and putting up with many calamities, in which all his will and all his strength of mind were taxed to the utmost. When all the natives of Leningrad now scattered about the country or in the army come together again, this glorious garrison which has stood so long at its post will feel at last a great weariness and a great contentment.

And the medal of stainless steel with the Admiralty spire gleaming on it, a medal on a red watered-silk ribbon with silver borders and the inscription 'For the defence of Leningrad', will be the symbol of the Soviet people's deepest gratitude to the defenders of the great city. This unpretentious medal passing from generation to generation, will tell our descendants what their forefathers, who were mighty in love and in hate, were like, and it will bear silent witness to what they did in the days of the Great Patriotic War. That is why the Leningraders speak of this medal with such respect and pride.

The very immobility of the Leningrad front is terrible to the enemy. For the second year the Germans wrap themselves up in their frayed greatcoats and peer into the mist, beyond which Leningrad lies as if in an enchanted circle.

Here and there batteries thunder, trench-mortars strafe some fortifications, and occasionally drunken Germans attempt a sortie, only to be mown down by murderous fire. Flares of all colours keep going up, so that the nervous Fritzes, who fear an attack, can keep watch on the deserted, snow-covered, thickly-mined no-man's-land.

But the bandits do not feel any more cheerful for that; they stare gloomily at the dark bastion of Pulkhovo Observatory and the ever-vigilant forts of Kronstadt, and, deep down, they know they will never capture this city. But all they care now is not to think about the time when they will be fleeing along the slippery roads, driven by the terrible Leningrad tanks, lashed by the fire of its fabulous guns and destroyed by the relentless shock-troops.

White-clad snipers creep out to the forward positions, indefatigably destroying the enemy's forces. Nearby some wooden buildings in Pushkino are on fire. In the cold air the smoke rolls along in streaks. Our devastated Pushkino will be unrecognizable. All that remains of Catherine's palace is a heap of ruins. The walls of the old Lycée are shattered, but the golden cupolas of the palace church still gleam and the tops of the trees loom dimly in the ancient park.

There are mighty battles here in which enormous masses of men clash, horsemen charge with flashing swords, supported by fighter planes—the cavalry of the sky—and by heavy-armoured tanks—the new Horse Guards. But men die and heroes are born in the minor skirmishes as well. Day and night brief, stubborn clashes are taking place; and men are going out on reconnaissance to bring back a "tongue."

A chance shell may kill a commander who has been through all the hell of the big battles and experienced all the fury of the most violent attacks. Such was the way that indomitable and steadfast Bolshevik, Benjamin Oganesovich Galstyan, died. Who on the Leningrad front did not know Galstyan? I remember him in the forests of the Karelian isthmus in front of the Mannerheim Line, making the round of the forward positions in an icy forest in a blizzard, and freezing cold under the murderous fire of the White Finns' strong points. I saw him in the forests of Sheloni in the sultry days of August last year, and I saw him in the front line among the rusty scrub of the Neva plain, where the chimneys of the Izhorsk factory loomed in the distance.

Galstyan was one of those men who win people's confidence. He was a kind-hearted, fearless and resolute man, and hated cowards with all his heart. He was plain of speech, and there was the sound sense of the common people in all his words, for he was himself a son of the people. He came to us from far-off, mountainous Armenia, and his speech revealed the passionate temperament of the southerner.

He loved brave, steadfast people, and always made a note in his papers of promising new names and outstanding actions—and he had a good many of them. I remember the following conversation I had with him, in his peculiarly lucid and vivid way of talking.

"Make a note of it," he said. "He's such a brave chap. There

are very few equal to him. Look what he has done. He was the first, understand, the first to break into Soltzy, right on the heels of the Germans. He was the first to capture the aerodrome. The company commander was wounded. 'I'm the commander,' he said, and led the men on, beat the Germans and chased them. . . . That's the sort of man he is. Make a note of his name, please, so as not to forget it —Nikolai Alexeyev."

Another time when the conversation turned on real and assumed courage, he said: "Now I've got a man called Gubko, a political officer. He's nothing special. What does he do? He brings up the ammunition. Rain or shine, barrage or no barrage, he keeps going. What do you say? Is he a good 'un or not? Think it over. I tell you he's a good 'un! Why? Because if there is no ammunition, the operation may fizzle out. If the ammunition is late, it costs us a lot. But to bring it up under fire you need to have a strong character, and if you bring it up every day from morning to night under fire, how many strong characters do you need to have! Think it over and tell me, is he a good 'un or not? He has never once been late with the ammunition. He's a good 'un all right. That's real work!"

The soldiers and commanders had a deep affection for Galstyan, and it was impossible not to have. He was killed when his dug-out got a direct hit. He was a soldier, born to fight, yet a chance shell during a lull in the fighting proved to be his fate. We will inscribe Galstyan's name in the imperishable list of heroes and defenders of Leningrad and will always remember him as a splendid patriot of our great city.

. . . The year is drawing to a close, full of battles and lit up with the glow of our victories. We will celebrate the New Year in our circle of friends, remembering all our absent ones. But we will remember that beyond the line of our sentries lies our own tortured country, where Soviet people are living in darkness under the German yoke. They must be saved, they must be freed. This is the task of the New Year. This is our duty, a matter of honour, a task to which we pledge ourselves.

BREAKING THE BLOCKADE

THE PATH IS FREE

By Ilya Ehrenburg

LAST autumn the German newspaper *Berliner Boersenzeitung* wrote: 'We will take Petersburg, as we took Paris.' The German sausage-makers were deceiving themselves. Is it true that they took Paris? They entered Paris as a visitor enters an hotel: the doors were thrown open for them by traitors. The German sausage-makers have made a mistake: Leningrad is not an hotel for Fritzes. The Ober-Leutnants were wondering where they were going to be billeted. Some said they would be in the Winter Palace, others in the Astoria. They have been given their billet under the soil.

Leningrad is more than a city: it is the pride of Russia. It was there that granite took the place of wood, and Rus became Russia. I do not know any other city so beautiful. Only a great people could create it. Everything in it is unique—the stone and the water, the fogs and the blizzards, the poetry and the labour. Is there anyone in the world who has not heard of the Nevsky Prospect? Leningrad entered history like an enormous ship cutting through the night. Did the contemptible S.S. troopers realize what they were attacking?

Leningrad has never known the heel of a conqueror. It was from St. Petersburg that the Russians dictated the peace terms to defeated Berlin. German sausage-makers, barbers and bone-setters used to come to St. Petersburg and feed themselves at Russia's table. But when the German generals advanced on Petrograd in 1918 they were stopped by the Petrograd workers. It was in these battles for the indomitable city a quarter of a century ago that the Red Army was born.

It is stated in a German military text-book that 'Leningrad is undefended by any natural obstacles.' The fools did not know that Leningrad is defended by the most effective obstacle: love for Russia.

Whom hasn't Hitler sent to assault the invincible city? There have been on the Leningrad front Alpine troops, Jägers, S.S. divisions, police detachments, Hitler's body-guards, the Spanish Blue Division, and Finns, all the tramps of Europe and all the 'aces' of Germany. For more than a year the Red Army has been beating off the enemy's attacks. Do the German widows know what 'Sinyavino' means?

All the nationalities of Russia have fought for Leningrad: the

Russian Vasili Nikulin, the Ukrainian Piotr Khomenko, the Georgian Djikiya, the Uzbek Rakhmanov, the Jew Sprintson, the Tatar Ginatulin. Some day whole volumes will be written about their heroic deeds. At present we will say briefly: they saved Leningrad.

I will mention also a little-known hero, the son of a bath-attendant from the town of Pushkino, Zhenya Oleinikov. He was eight years old. He threw a grenade into an automobile in which a German general was sitting. A German soldier seized the boy and knocked his head against a tree, smashing his skull. The Germans shot Zhenya's father and mother and burnt their house. But the butchers did not destroy and were powerless to destroy the great emotion which inspired the eight-year-old boy to throw the grenade. Patriotism has inspired the defenders of Leningrad. Piotr Khomenko, who was wounded three times, killed eleven Germans in a hand-to-hand fight. Seven airmen attacked seventy enemy planes. At the approaches to Leningrad the Germans have got to know the meaning of Russia's wrath.

The Germans have battered the beautiful city with bombs and shells. They have tried to capture it by starvation. Last winter was a terrible one for the inhabitants. There was no light, no water, no fuel and no bread. One day Stepan Liebediev, a senior soldier, showed me a letter from his twelve-year-old son. The boy wrote: 'Papa, you probably know that we had a very hard winter. I am writing to you the plain truth that Mummy died on February 14th. She got very weak and the last few days she couldn't even lift herself. Papa, I buried her. I got a sledge and took her away. A soldier helped me. We dug a grave before it got dark and I put a mark on it. Papa, don't worry about me. Things are better with us now. I am strong. I am learning at home as you ordered, and I am working. We are helping to repair automobiles. They haven't captured Leningrad and they won't, either. You're lucky, Papa, to be able to beat them. Take revenge for Mummy.'

I copied out the letter. Then I glanced at Stepan Liebediev's eyes. They were lit up with a stern fire, and I realized that those eyes were the eyes of Russia. We will not forget the sufferings of Leningrad. We will speak about them when the hour of judgment comes.

The Germans did not capture the city by starvation. Old men and women worked under the bombs and shells, turning out weapons for the front. Leningrad was a front, and the front was Leningrad.

Russia came to the rescue. Last winter lorries drove across the ice to bring food to the city. In the summer bold sailors guarded the route across Lake Ladoga. Airmen flew over the enemy's guns and brought valuable goods to the city. Then the second autumn of the blockade arrived. Heroic workers laid a track across the ice. The Germans had put a noose round the neck of Leningrad, but Russia

prevented them from pulling it tight. And now the great moment has come when the Red Army has cut the noose. The Red Army had to go many miles, and every yard of ground had been fortified by the Germans, every foot was a fortress. Yesterday a few words shook the whole world: the path to Leningrad is free. The path was made by the heroes of the Red Army. They made it with their courage. They have taken a stone off the heart of Russia.

Our attack is like a great, purifying storm. It is increasing and getting stronger every day. It is taking hold of other fronts. It is smashing the Germans' power. Something cracked in the hearts of the 'victors' of yesterday. They are still resisting desperately, but it is the obstinacy of a suicide.

The attack is increasing. Germany is trembling. We are bringing revenge for Leningrad and all the sufferings of our people.

THE BIRTH OF THE GUARDS

By Nikolai Tikhonov

STANDING on a forest road the Brigade Commander—he was a lieutenant-colonel at the time in question—patiently observed how unevenly the machines moved along. Their jerky movements showed that the drivers were inexperienced. A tank swerves aside and suddenly plunges into the ditch. Another tank almost runs into it, pulls up and begins to back awkwardly at the risk of colliding with a third. The latter is at a loss how to get out of the way, as a fourth has come up behind. The lieutenant-colonel halts the traffic.

This is what happened every day. The unit was formed up again. The machines had only just arrived, the men were young and insufficiently trained. Any broken ground seemed to them an insuperable obstacle. They looked with anxious curiosity at the steep sides of the hills. To go off the road into the forest seemed to them a very risky undertaking. Not all of them were able to shoot well when halted, and shooting on the move was quite beyond them.

In a word, they still had to be put through a long and complicated course of training to make them into experienced, daring tankmen with knowledge and initiative, who would put the enemy to flight. They needed experienced instructors, and such their commanders were.

They had been through the battles of the Great Patriotic War. They had been through the difficult fighting in the snows of Finland, on the Mannerheim Line, at Vyborg and on the ice of the Gulf of Finland. They included such men as Junior Lieutenant Emelyanov, of the Order of the Red Banner, three times wounded; Lieutenant-

Colonel Rumyantsev, who came from the Ladoga line and received the Red Star for his battle services; Major Parshev; Major Kocherov; Captain Legeza, three times decorated; Major Durov; Major Weissman; Captain Melnikov, who had also taken part in the civil war; Major Krasnov, and others.

They saw that the soldiers who were to become tankmen were still inexperienced, but they were young Soviet patriots burning with the desire to become real soldiers and fearless, competent tankmen. The country sent these young people from Gorki, Yaroslav, Bashkiria, the Ukraine, Tataria, and even from the Caucasus. Many nearly broke down when they failed to handle their machines properly.

At that time nobody could have said that among the inexperienced tankmen of the brigade some would in seven months' time become Heroes of the Soviet Union, or that they would all be worthy of the title of Guards. But they did become Guardsmen. And it was no easy matter.

Exercises began as soon as it was light. They also went out during the night, when they were roused by the alarm and set out to fight.

The Brigade Commander saw how the young tankmen were every day getting more and more accustomed to the complicated work, and he was pleased with their eagerness.

He stood in front of a steep mound, and the tankmen looked at it apathetically. In their opinion a tank could do nothing with a hill like that. But the lieutenant-colonel said: "Who'll climb up that slope?" The tankmen looked at him as though he were joking. But his voice was stern.

"Comrade Lieutenant-Colonel," they replied. "Our tanks won't go up a hill like that! It's too steep." "Who's your best driver?" said the lieutenant-colonel. At the moment nobody wanted to be the best driver. All of them were diffident. The young tankmen hesitated. Then they said: "Pashtchenko is the best driver." "Pashtchenko!" said the lieutenant-colonel. "All right. You begin, Comrade Pashtchenko."

Pashtchenko related afterwards: "I never thought my tank would be able to do anything of the sort. I looked attentively and I saw that I'd have to drive a bit sideways, but I didn't think I could do it. I set about the job. I thought every moment I was going to roll down. But the machine made headway. I kept a tight hold on it, forgot about everything, if I could only get up as far as the middle and there it would be easier. And I got there, and right to the top as though there was nothing the matter."

"The next!" said the lieutenant-colonel. The next man went, and

reached the top. It was impossible to see through the steel walls what was happening to the drivers, how they were trembling with excitement, knitting their brows and muttering all sorts of things, but one after the other the tanks mastered the steep incline that had seemed insuperable. One of them gave a lurch and got out of hand. It rolled down, but the lieutenant-colonel pretended not to notice anything and calmly said: "Next one!" The next tank climbed the hill. Only two of them got out of hand.

Sweating from what they had gone through and disappointed, the unsuccessful ones themselves tried to get their tanks back into the line.

The tanks went across a bog, which it was impossible to cross except at an even speed without making a single jerk, or you would founder in a quagmire. Tanks crumpled the trees, tanks climbed grunting up the slopes, tanks sank into the mud and snow, and the bespattered but cheerful tankmen felt more and more confident every day. They sometimes had to stay two or three days in some hole, where they happened to have trouble with their machine, and they knew it was no use shouting: "Lend a hand with the tug!" They tried to find a solution on the spot, and how proud they were when they were able to put the tank right and get back to report that the tank had returned to its place in the line.

In fact, the commander was sometimes unable to restrain his feelings when he saw a fine piece of manoeuvring and real skill on the part of a driver. "Let me congratulate you, you smart lad!" he exclaimed, embracing the tankman, whose cheeks were flushed with pride.

The tankmen were now able to shoot on the move, and the results of their firing became better and better. Steel spurs were fitted on to the caterpillar tracks, and the tanks became astonishing acrobats, whose movements amazed the senior commanders who arrived.

The tankmen had already affectionately christened their 'T-60's, 'Maliutkas' ('babies'), and chaffingly invented for them the nickname 'KV-60.' They already knew what their clever, swift, light machines could do.

They began to make raids. The tasks became more and more difficult. They had to go at night in wintry conditions, on the alert and without headlamps, to find the enemy in a given area. Again they began to fall into the ditches and off the bridges. A conference was held, and after a lot of talk and excitement it was admitted they were not prepared and were unable to overcome these difficulties. They had to concentrate again and go on training and training. The commanders spared neither time nor labour.

Then something else was added: it was necessary to co-operate with the infantry and to go into battle with a platoon, a company, or

a battalion. The men were now shooting excellently and could drive the tanks with great skill. They fully realized the great task before them—the task of annihilating the enemy forces that were blockading the great city of Lenin. Political instructors explained to them the situation at the front. They began to learn how to break through fortified lines.

They were no longer afraid of barbed wire obstacles and mine-fields. They learnt to estimate the solidity of the ice in water obstacles and to deal with strong points. They learnt how to fight in the streets. Armoured cars went through the heavy battle course with them.

They were told they would take part in the liberation of Leningrad, in the fighting to break the blockade. They were filled with joy. All they asked was: "Will it be soon? Will the fighting start soon?" They were told: "Soon. Get ready!"

They were taken into a forest. They became forest dwellers. The forest was covered with snow. The place was wild, the weather was cold and the winter days were short. In the huts and dug-outs all the talk was of the approaching operations.

The tanks were no longer working alone. The neighbouring divisions trained together with them in the capture of fortified lines. The infantry got accustomed to the tankmen, the automatic-riflemen briskly leapt on to the tanks, the sappers went skilfully in front and the scouts were indefatigable. The exercises were already taking place almost at the front line. Two observation posts had been fitted up there, from which the left bank of the Neva could be kept well covered. The enemy's fortifications were under constant observation.

A detailed description had already been composed of the locality through which the tanks were to move, and the route and order of march were settled.

Reconnaissance ascertained by January 8th that with the exception of places in the district of Belyaev and Martyno the banks were inaccessible to tanks. Mine-fields were thickly sown in them. The trenches ran along the bank and had anti-tank pits three to four yards wide and six feet deep in front of them.

The tankmen made similar pits and trenches and began training together with the infantry.

Each driver was shown where he would be sent at the time of the attack. At last, after seven months' incessant training, the tankmen bore no resemblance to the faltering young men who used to keep looking round and shouting: "Give a hand with the tug!" These former collective farmers, workmen and clerks had become real fighters. Nothing could baffle them any more.

In the 'T-60' tank the tank commander is the master of the machine, the gunner, the machine-gunner and the radio operator. The men realized the force of personal example and mastered the technique of signalling. But the tank commander must also know tactics, how to go into battle and how to fight. He must know how to attack, to make use of defence, hide in an ambush prepared for the enemy and overcome the enemy's anti-tank defences.

The Brigade Command held conferences, at which the last details of the preparations were worked out. The brigade was to pass a test, not in an ordinary battle but in an historic combat.

What the men had so long thought about in the long winter nights was to become a reality.

The memorable evening of January 11th, 1943, arrived. The words of the order to attack and to break the blockade of Leningrad rang out in the solemn stillness.

The enemy bank was hidden in mist, and was lit up from time to time by rockets. The Germans had no idea that tanks would be able to cross the Neva and climb its steep banks, especially 'T-60' tanks.

The tanks were got ready at the starting point before daylight.

In the darkness of the January night the right bank appeared to be empty. But it was full of units who were ready to attack and lay concealed till the appointed hour.

Black columns of smoke rose on the left bank and mingled with the heavy clouds that spread along the ground. The ear could not distinguish the individual explosions. A terrible fury of artillery fire wrought havoc among the enemy's fortifications. Nobody could remember anything like it, and many had been in the war since the very first day. The raging, roaring, seething, lighting-flashing fire sent up a cloud of snow and frozen earth. It tore iron and steel into pieces, blasted guns and threw up German bodies together with the remains of beams and shattered trees in a way that beggared description. It was a furious roar that rolled along the bank and rumbled away into the distance. It was impossible to hear one another, no matter how much you shouted to your neighbour. The blasts of air from the salvoes rocked the trees. It seemed impossible that human beings could produce such an effect. The artillery preparation resembled a convulsion of the elements, an inconceivable storm that had never been known before.

And yet this storm was produced by unpretentious men in padded coats and fur jackets, and it was produced according to a plan, so that not a single shot was fired at random, but every one had its pur-

pose, and all the destruction had been thought out and systematized beforehand.

Beginning with a hardly perceptible shot, this storm ended likewise with a solitary, faintly sounding shot that was distinguished from the general roar. Two rockets described a small arc. Their green and red light was diffused in the clear sky, giving the signal for the attack. After the avalanche of fire the storming parties rushed on to the ice.

The Brigade Commander had chosen an observation post where he could watch the movement of the tanks along the river to the right and to the left.

The tanks climbed on to the ice and, churning up a light spray of snow, went across to the battle. Mines exploded with dark puffs of smoke alongside their path.

The Germans began to reply at random from somewhere in the distance. Machine-gun fire could be heard: the white figures of the infantry were already running across the ice. These storming parties knew that they had to get across the river in three or four minutes. The tanks had already disappeared from sight and were now scrambling up the slopes of the bank. The drivers could clearly see the terrible devastation the artillery had caused in the enemy's defences.

The lieutenant-colonel tried to imagine what had happened to the tanks which had been the first to reach the bank.

This is what happened to them. When Lieutenant Kopyto's tanks reached the debris-scattered bank they did not stop, but rumbling and clattering, made for the German strong points that had remained intact. The fire at close quarters seemed like a shower after the storm of the artillery barrage. But it was difficult to advance without sappers, as there were mines all round.

There was an explosion, and Kopyto's tank staggered, turned over on to its side and stopped, and behind it came Sergeant Semionov's machine in a cloud of smoke. This was their baptism of fire. And the two crippled machines remained where they had stopped. But they did not cease firing. After sending off the wounded, Lieutenant Kopyto and driver-mechanic Zabelin spent two days at a distance of twenty yards from the Germans, firing from the spot and striking at the enemy firing points. They remembered that it was the tankman's duty not to leave his machine and to fight on in order to help the infantry. They did not know how things were going with their comrades, but from the booming noise of the battle that spread along the whole bank they realized things were going ahead, that the attack continued, that the enemy had been thrown into confusion and must be battered without interruption.

They forgot about time and food and the fact that they had long been thirsty. But they were right in their judgment of the situation.

Meanwhile Major Parshev's tanks were going ahead, skirting the shattered German guns and the town of Schlüsselburg, which Capt. Legeza's armoured cars were trying to reach in order to cut the Germans' line of retreat. Major Arzamasov's tanks were the first to drive a wedge into the enemy's fortifications situated near the bank. The tankmen saw the Germans rushing from trench to trench and officers with revolvers in their hands driving the soldiers forward. The tanks trampled down the anti-tank obstacles and circled round a copse which was full of sheds, dug-outs and fortified structures. There were piles of sacks with the black swastika, the robbers' mark, which stood out clearly on the shaggy white of the sacks. The tankmen saw bolting horses which had broken loose, piles of shells in straw packings, machines abandoned in the bushes, and a great number of bodies lying spread out on the snow.

The intoxication of battle gradually took hold of the men. As though grown up with their machines, they skilfully rushed in the track of the retreating enemy, driving him from Maryinaya Roshtcha to the area of Pilmelnitza and the Liliya wood.

Time went quickly. The wintry January day was already fading in blue dusk and the battle had only just begun to flare up properly. The tank commanders glanced at their watches and were surprised to find that it was already six o'clock and would soon be dark. This white road, dotted with abandoned lumber, weapons and dead Germans, led to settlement No. 5, and south-east to the men of the Volkhov front, who were now forcing a way for themselves in the twilight in order to link up with the soldiers of the Leningrad front.

The sky over Schlüsselburg was filled with an enormous red glow and constant firing came from that direction. The armoured cars were operating there. The infantry, who had co-operated in the training, were now taking part in the battle, and the tankmen were delighted at the sight of the fearless riflemen running from snowdrift to snowdrift and of the grenades exploding at the entrances to the dug-outs and strong points. And they were overjoyed to hear the thundering shouts of the attackers in the icy majesty of the shattered forests.

Lieutenant Kopyto could no longer see anything in front of him. It was night. All he thought about was that his machine had been the first to cross the Neva. The thought seemed to give him extra strength, and he no longer felt his loneliness in the disabled tank with the same dismay as in the first moments of his enforced hold-up.

On the staff maps, marked with pencils of different colours, this bit of territory bore the peaceful and pretty name of Liliya wood. Time will pass, and it will once again be visited by the peaceful citizen, resting under its shady branches on a hot summer's day. He will find

it hard to imagine the furious battle that took place among these trees on January 13th, 1943, when Major Arzamasov's tanks fought for the wood the whole day long after penetrating it by the road that runs from the village of Maryino.

The tankmen were already accustomed to the terrible monotony of the fighting. There seemed to be nothing but a repetition of the same snowdrifts and trees, the same dead Germans with their arms outspread and their camouflage cloaks thrown open, revealing all sorts of rags drawn over their flimsy frog-green greatcoats, the same anti-tank guns firing from behind a traverse, the same tedious firing and exploding of shells, after which bitter, stifling, green-grey fumes seeped in through the tank slits.

Yet at the same time they experienced the feeling of moving forward, that inexplicable sense of attacking, which they had formerly imagined only in their minds. All that was happening now was known as attacking. The most surprising things happened and were immediately forgotten, only to be brought to mind during the rest after the battle, when the dirty, oil-begrimed, soot-blackened tankmen with lively, sparkling eyes remembered everything all at once and talked about all they had been through and seen.

Senior Sergeant Melkonyan suddenly knocked against a red-hot gun—it gave out heat like a red-hot frying-pan. The tank rebounded and started to fall on its left side. At first Melkonyan did not realize what was happening. There had been no explosion, therefore it was neither a mine nor a shell. It was all quiet, but the tank was sinking as though a strong hand were pushing it from behind into the ground. Melkonyan realized that he had tumbled into a bog.

The cannon and machine-gun now had a chance to get cool, because it was now only possible to fire at the tops of the trees. Melkonyan opened the hatch. The night was frosty, blue and starlit. He pulled the machine-gun up on to the roof. The driver-mechanic climbed out with hand-grenades.

They waited for the Germans, and the Germans soon appeared. It is true they were not in great numbers, but only a few Tommy-gunners who happened to have come across the disabled tank and could not resist the temptation to finish it off. But they were met with machine-gun fire and grenades. This was how the crew put into effect the lieutenant-colonel's teaching that they should find a way out of every difficulty themselves. They were unable to move the tank, but they could turn it into a strong point. And this strong point which had suddenly been established in the thicket kept up the fight for four days. Later on the infantry came and helped to drag it out, and the tank went forward in front of the riflemen and the gun, having rested, pounded the retreating enemy with renewed force.

The tankmen were already fighting like experienced soldiers. The battle was for Pilmelnitza and settlement No. 3. Junior Lieutenant Paputza was the favourite of his company. He was well known in the brigade. His men followed him into the thick of the fight. A German strong point, enveloped in smoke, was firing shell after shell. The tank flattened the strong point and passed over it to crush six trench mortars that were holding up the infantry. It destroyed the trench mortars. The riflemen knew that there would be no delay wherever Paputza's tank went. It went straight for the shooting, and the enemy abandoned their weapons and either gave themselves up or took to flight.

The tank was hit by a shell. The machine shuddered and stopped. The driver lay dead over the lever. Paputza climbed out of the machine and went to another tank. The machine had stopped and was smoking. Its driver-mechanic was also dead. Paputza called up Junior Lieutenant Gorbalko, a platoon commander, got into the tank and took hold of the levers himself. The tank went forward in smoke, and other tanks followed on behind.

The Germans were frantic. Their last anti-tank guns resolved to sell what life remained to them dearly. But the riflemen following Paputza's tanks were already getting close up to their black muzzles, which were seeking out the tanks and traversing with the swiftness of the doomed. The riflemen saw Paputza's tank struck by several shells at once from different sides. The shells tore into the tank, and a blue flame flared up and danced around the turret. The dead heroes were being burnt, but the flames provoked such a wave of hatred in the infantry that they rushed forward and nothing could stop them.

Sergeant Evgeni Kuzmin jumped off his tank (he was in the riding party) and was the first to break into a staff dug-out. Here it was, the German hide-out! He did not count the enemy. He shot one, and a second rushed at him. The second German got the Sergeant's bullet, and a third threw up his hands, gazing with horror at this furious and terrible man who had suddenly appeared.

Everyone strove to be the first to break into the enemy's den. In this there was no distinction between the Leningrader, the Gorki man or the son of far-off Armenia, Akub Djanoyan. He led his detachment forward against a trench where the Germans were hiding and Akub leapt over the parapet and began a fight the details of which it is difficult to make out. Bayonet and butt-end, bullet and grenade worked alternately. He gave free play to his fury. Take that, German!

Akub had read about the exploits of the Mgerov, the great heroes of ancient Armenian epic poetry. To-day it is difficult to say whether he equalled them or not, but he killed fifteen Hitlerites. He captured

a trench and then another and broke into the dug-outs. Here they are, four of them in a row. He is wounded, the blood flows down his arm and congeals in dark streams, but he does not feel any pain.

This is how this splendid soldier of a motorized rifle battalion fought. It was the birth of a Guardsman in the very fire of battle.

The battle goes on. Battered tanks lie about the thickets and the peat quarries. Some of them are burnt out, and blue, hot smoke is still mounting from them. Others are disfigured with gaping holes and broken caterpillars. But the rest continue to surge forward, followed by the infantry. The second tank company is already pressing the enemy towards the east. The Germans are already taking flight in groups and firing frantically about them on their way to settlement No. 5.

Settlement No. 5. What a humble, peaceful name! What a blood-soaked field of battle! Dug-outs and trenches, communication trenches, a double obstacle, the latter a new German invention: a space between two thick walls filled up with earth, stones and bricks; guns, machine-guns, automatics, trench mortars.

The riflemen of the motorized rifle battalion and Major Arzamasov's tanks turned up here. While a fierce battle was raging on the north-western border of the Kolokolchik wood, where one line of counter-attacking Hitlerites was replaced by another, and while Major Parshev's tanks were beating off these counter-attacks, furious fighting went on here the whole day long.

When the young soldiers swore to fight courageously before going into battle, they still did not realize what they would have to go through. But not one of them shirked his task. The commanders set the example. Senior Lieutenant Ivan Gordeyev laid out fifty Germans with his machine-gun. Following his example, machine-gunner Gusevich piled up a mound of eighty Hitlerites. And this was only the first day of the battle for the workers' settlement No. 5, a small place.

The battle here went on for five days.

Towards evening on January 15th the Soviet soldiers broke into the outskirts of the settlement as though they were the gates of an impregnable fortress. They captured rich booty there. The Lieutenant-Colonel afterwards admitted that even he was surprised when the infantry and tanks captured a battery of enormous 150 mm. howitzers which up till then had been shelling the Ladoga line, as well as a battery of 75's, three batteries of trench mortars and several ammunition dumps.

Around the guns lay dead Hitlerites, shells and shell cases. Ten

firing points were annihilated in this battle. And this was only the beginning.

All the area in front of settlement No. 5 was as though saturated with death. The Germans had to be prised out of every crevice, every twist of the trenches, every dug-out. No easy task fell to the young soldiers of the motorised battalion. During that day they advanced 1,500 yards in constant hand-to-hand fighting. Even old-timers would have been exhausted, yet these young men had never been under fire before. It was their first battle and their first victory. Clenching their teeth, the soldiers went forward, fell and got up again. And the wounded remained in the line.

The tanks went into the attack without fearing the mine-fields and the anti-tank guns. Many were knocked out, but every tankman knew that the place he was striving for was the principal objective of the battle and that it meant the defeat of the Germans and contact with the men of the Volkhov front—the breaking of the blockade.

The intenseness of the battle of January 15th might seem to have reached the maximum, but the battles of the 16th even surpassed it. Parshev's tankmen had to fight for the Kolokolchik wood. Realizing their inevitable doom, the Germans resisted desperately. But they were up against tankmen who had sworn they would annihilate the enemy.

In the marshy Fikus wood Senior Sergeant Maxim Barzilo crushed the Germans under his tank tracks. A wound made him quiver with pain but he could not quite tell himself whether the pain was from the wound or whether it was some sort of emotion, a storm of agonizing rage. He drove on in the bloody tracks of the Germans until the whole wood was cleared. And Lieutenant Leonid Alexandrov with his section and twenty infantrymen came up against three hundred Germans. His tanks and infantry went through them like a steam-roller. Three hundred German bodies remained to tell the tale.

While this was going on in woods with the peaceful names of Kolokolchik and Fikus, the honourable task of liberating the old Russian town of Schlüsselburg fell to another type of weapon. The armoured cars of the tank brigade crossed the Neva, skirted what remained of flourishing Maryino and turned towards the town.

It was six o'clock in the evening. A light snow was falling. Schlüsselburg was on fire. Units of Trubachev's division and Potiekhin's ski-troops set off to storm the town and the Preobrazhenskaya hill. Captain Leonty Legeza led the armoured cars into battle. In modern warfare an armoured car offers an attractive and easy target, and great skill is needed in organizing them for an engagement.

Whenever it was necessary, the crews sacrificed themselves in order

to achieve success. Thus Junior Lieutenant Laptev drove up to a strong point and shielded the infantry from deadly fire. He came under the fire of an anti-tank gun and died like a hero, but the infantry had already gone forward under the protection of his armoured car. The fearless adjutant of the battalion, Captain Popov, broke into the streets of the town. The cars went in such formation that the leading one, coming under the fire of a strong point, revealed the enemy's position so that it could be attacked by the following car. The strong point was immediately paralysed and annihilated. Popov himself destroyed four enemy firing points. Well-aimed shells crashed into the loopholes, and one after the other they were silenced.

The battles went on all day and night in the streets of Schlüsselburg. Then a series of explosions began: the Germans were blowing up the buildings before retreating. The fire spread down the streets, but the battle had already been decided. The armoured cars passed through the streets and over the snow-covered old canals, pursuing the scattered groups of German Tommy-guns who were trying to save themselves by flight.

The grey dawn broke. On a tall building the red flag glows in the rays of the low sun, above the liberated town. The bullet-riddled boards bearing the orders of the German Commandant who has bolted in panic have an absurd look.

Settlement No. 5 remained the chief point against which our attacks were directed. At five o'clock in the morning the order of the High Command that the settlement must be taken at all costs was read out to the battalions. The Germans who had dug themselves in there were hindering us from linking up with the troops of the Volkhov front.

The Germans brought up strong reinforcements into this sector. All the Hitlerites who had fled from the Schlüsselburg area were flocking there. Having taken up their positions in the scrub and coppices, quarries, strong points and houses, they were putting up a desperate resistance.

The tanks of two of our battalions carried on the fight, using the tactics of mobile defence, making thrusts from time to time and dealing strong counter-blows at the enemy.

In the darkness of the early morning five hundred Hitlerites, under the cover of three tanks—one heavy and two medium—launched an attack from a clump of young trees. Lieutenant Dmitri Osatiuk's tank, which had moved forward, was in great danger. He could not contend with the heavy tank, but it was against a tankman's principles to abandon a position even when faced by superior forces. Osatiuk

realized in a moment what had to be done, but it was necessary that the gunners of Senior Lieutenant Romanov's battery should also understand in time and not delay.

Osatiuk ordered his driver, Makarenko, to retreat in sight of the Germans in the direction of the battery. Ploughing up the bushes, the tank began to move back. It retreated as though dancing, in order to evade the fire of the German heavy tank. This dexterous manoeuvring was the result of the skill acquired in all the long preparatory training. Makarenko swung his machine from side to side, yet all the time edged nearer and nearer to our battery. It was dark. The German turned his headlights full on.

They were now close to the battery. Senior Lieutenant Romanov saw the German tank, and his brave gunners immediately rushed to their guns. The German went after Osatiuk's tank as though bewitched, not suspecting the danger. He was right up to the battery before Romanov's guns opened fire. The German tank was blown to pieces, the one following it was also knocked out almost at once, the third turned round and began to make off.

Then Osatiuk rushed at the German infantry. Pressed back to the ravine and rushing from side to side, the mass of soldiers were unable to save themselves. Osatiuk crushed them with his caterpillars in a frenzy of rage.

Hundreds of Germans perished under the caterpillars of his tank; out of the whole detachment only a few escaped.

In the course of these battles Osatiuk destroyed eleven guns, seventeen anti-tank guns, nine machine-gun nests and more than five hundred Hitlerites. Thus were born the Tank Guardsmen and the new Heroes of the Soviet Union.

Piles of bodies lay in the area in front of settlement No. 5, but the fighting went on as furiously as ever.

At night the scouts went forward. They returned and reported that in Tiulpan wood there were four tanks dug into the ground and anti-tank guns that were firing incessantly at our infantry and tanks.

The lieutenant-colonel concentrated artillery fire on to the spot. The salvoes of the brigade artillery and the powerful trench mortars began to thunder. The flashes of the explosions lit up the wood. Everybody felt that the climax of the battle was approaching. The grimy, tired, blood-bespattered soldiers drowsed for a moment, leaning against the snowdrifts, in the shell-craters and in the ditches, and then took up their weapons again. The night roared and rumbled like a volcano.

The morning of the historic day, January 18th, arrived. The Germans' resistance did not weaken, but it was clear that it would

be broken. The Germans had already fled from Schlüsselsburg, the Staroladozhsky and Novoladozhsky canals and settlements Nos. 1, 2 and 3.

Our attack on settlement No. 5 was intensified to such an extent that tanks and tommy-gunners were already fighting in the streets, and by twelve o'clock the Tiulpan wood was in our hands.

One of the first to penetrate the streets of the settlement with his company was Lieutenant Filippov. He was the first to cross the Neva, the first to enter settlement No. 5, and the first to link up with the Volkhov men. He displayed amazing tenacity in fighting when he stood for ten hours on end at a distance of fifteen yards from the Germans and beat off all their counter-attacks. Now his tank was going along the streets and putting an end to the last nests of resistance.

The hour of victory came. At two o'clock in the afternoon the tankmen saw some infantry coming towards them. Where could they have come from in that direction? Suddenly it dawned upon them that these were the long-awaited soldiers of the Volkhov front. The men in the tank wanted to shout hurrah and notwithstanding the battle rush forward to welcome their dear brothers. Here was the moment they had waited for so long! Among the burning houses, shattered dug-outs and bodies lying all round, the tankmen jumped out of their tank and welcomed the soldiers who had come from the east. Everybody in the street embraced one another, and their eyes shone with the joy of victory.

The blockade of Leningrad was broken. The task appointed by the High Command had been carried out. The defeated Germans were retreating from the settlement in disorder, throwing away their equipment and weapons.

But this was not the end of the battle. It was only a pause. In an hour's time they would have to move further on. The tankmen said good-bye to the Volkhov men, got into their machines, lined up and moved forward to further fighting in the direction of Sinyavino in the south.

Clouds of smoke were already spreading over Sinyavino, where the guns were roaring and the Sinyavino peat fields stretched before the tanks with their sheer, slippery bluffs and pits that were filled with mounds of snow.

Few recently formed regiments and brigades can boast of so long a record of exploits performed the very first time they went into action. The number of men of the Tank Brigade who were decorated after this glorious epic of the Neva exceeded two hundred and fifty. Some

of them, like Osatiuk and Makarenko, became Heroes of the Soviet Union.

The correct, strict training which aimed at hardening the character and mastering the machines and methods of modern warfare had fully justified themselves. The young tankmen richly deserved the title of Guardsmen.

. . . The snow has become soft and spongy. The rays of the March sun playing on the trunks of the big pine-trees are almost hot. The distant forests have taken on a bluish tint. There is a frosty lightness in the air. A warm breeze is blowing. Spring is here.

The careful tankmen are busy looking after their tanks. They are no longer the simple, inexperienced lads they were when they nervously drove the tanks for the first time in their difficult training. They are Guardsmen, who have been in ferocious battles. Everything about them is different: their manner and bearing, and the whole manner of their approach to their fighting weapon. They are now disciplined, smart, experienced fighters. Many of them have decorations on their breasts.

They no longer talk over recent battles with the excited curiosity of novices, but with the businesslike composure of veterans. All their mistakes and their comrades' failures are discussed in detail, as are also their exploits. They are very proud of their unit and commanders. They are anxiously looking forward to the day when they will take the oath to the banner of the Guards.

We are in the second spring of the war. There will be new battles, new, desperate attacks, and more than once the Soviet tanks will move forward again with their Guards' banner held aloft to annihilate the enemy's defences and destroy the Fascists.

Planes returning to the airfield from operations pass with a measured drone over the brigade's resting-place. They seem to be inviting the tankmen to fresh battles and reminding them that there will be more fighting to-morrow. As they rock their wings they seem to say: "Are you ready?"

The tankmen look up from their machines at the sky and wave their oil-begrimed hands. Yes, they are ready!

THE VOLKHOV ROAD

By Nikolai Tikhonov

WE set out from Leningrad on a grey January morning, when a hazy fringe of mist was trailing over the ground.

Breaking up into heavy folds, the grey mist disclosed the stern

marks of war, buildings demolished for firewood or shattered by bombs, the white turrets of tanks on their way to the front, columns of marching automatic-riflemen, skiers gliding over the snow-covered fields, covered lorries marked with a red cross. We drove through what had once been copses forming part of the green belt of the northern capital. They had been cut down to the roots by the women of Leningrad. The timber was used for fortifications, dug-outs, fascines, firewood. The marshes from now on were crossed by military roads, along which we were driving to one of the Neva crossings.

A crossing! What a peaceful, ordinary word! On the Neva since September, 1941, this word had meant only fighting, the roar of shells, the whining of bombs and the heroic efforts of thousands of fighters. Bodies and smashed boats floated down the river. Both banks of the Neva are of almost equal height, and nobody could go down to the water from either side with impunity. The roadway passed along the bank itself, and it was deserted. People made their way by the communication trench alongside, and their heads were on a level with the tarmac on which the bullets cracked. In the winter pieces of shattered ice flew up into the air, and it was only through good field-glasses that you could catch the sharp glint of the enemy's observation posts. The right bank, looking just as deserted as the left, rose like the wall of a fortress. The white silence of death hung over the frozen river.

The first thing that helped us to realize that the blockade had been broken was the calm signal of the traffic control-man and the waving of the flag showing the way to the river crossing. The sappers have made a road down the steep bank. The descent is not difficult, but it needs care on the part of a driver, especially at night. Of such crossings there is more than one. The car drove on to the ice and went across the river to the left bank, following the path taken by our soldiers on the day of their attack. They were given only four minutes in which to get over these thousand yards of open space, over which the bullets whistled and the shells roared. It was impossible to take cover on the ice. Some companies, unable to make headway against the terrific fire, lay down and they suffered heavy losses. On reaching the bank, the soldiers were faced with a high frozen wall with low scrub. They scrambled up it like the walls of a fortress.

Puffing and panting, our car scrambled up on to the left bank. We drove into a forest that still retained traces of the recent battles and was filled with the rumble of the present fighting. Sixteen months the Germans were encamped here and introduced their ways.

Pillaged country of the Neva! You have known all the horror of Fascist barbarism, but you have also seen the sweet hour of revenge. The Leningrad warriors passed this way to unite with those of Volkhov.

On this high bank they struck at the Germans with fire and bayonet. Here lie, half covered with snow, the bodies of artillery observers, the bodies of Fritzes who called themselves Grenadiers, the bodies of Pomeranians who came to plunder the land of Russia. In the forest the so-called Pomeranian camp is crammed with hundreds of cars, piled-up sacks of flour and oats bearing the abominable sign of the swastika, motor-cycles, stacks of rifles, guns, shells, boxes of ammunition, jam, ersatz honey, cigarettes. Everything was abandoned by the Germans when they took to flight.

The car drives on. On the right the Schlüsselburg fortress rises out of the ice of the Neva like a work of giants. It was built with the characteristic turrets and walls of the eighteenth century. You won't find any old romanticism of war in that formidable pile of ruins now. The fortress stood the blows of the enemy like an immense strong point, and all the fury of hundreds of shellings and bombings failed to break the resistance of its defenders.

It was defended by the Baltic sailors and the Leningrad infantry. A quarter of a mile distant from it stands the town of Schlüsselburg, or, rather, what remains of it. Thousands of its inhabitants have been driven away to Germany, to the slave markets. A great many were killed in the torture-chambers of the local Gestapo. The remaining two hundred and sixty people were taken to the edge of the town, where they were driven out to work. They were permitted to move round about their huts till two o'clock, after which time they were threatened with shooting on the spot if they appeared in the street. Holding the town, the Germans thought they had shut the eastern gates of Leningrad with a strong lock and put the key into their pocket. It was from here they shelled the road to Leningrad and waited for the capitulation of the great city.

The Soviet solders under the command of Trubachev broke into the town from two sides. A stubborn battle was fought in the streets, in the ruins of the cotton-printing factory, on the canals and on the wharf where the openwork buildings give it the look of a summer-house. The Pomeranian Grenadiers were driven out of every cranny and in the end they took to flight. The units advancing from the south-east of the town struck at them from the rear, and stone-stiff Fritzes are lying about the town and the fields. They fought like drunken men and they perished like mad, baited animals. Their gullets are stopped with snow. Our soldiers step over them with aversion.

The German heavy artillery is pounding away in impotent fury, but its efforts keep getting less noisy and of shorter duration. Its noise is covered by the uninterrupted thunder of our guns. Our car drives through the streets of Schlüsselburg, and bumping over the

humpy bridge, comes out on to a road which trails away into the snowy distance. Access to this road was gained at the price of ferocious fighting, blood and iron, skill and daring. On the right are the places where the historic meeting between the soldiers of the two fronts took place. Artists will take this as a subject for their art, commemorating it for all time in music, painting, sculpture and verse. It is a theme that will never fade from the memory of the Russian people. It was the culmination of long efforts when the commanders and soldiers embraced one another on the snow-covered field amid the scattered bodies and shattered weapons of the enemy, while explosions flashed nearby and in the distance as the battle continued towards the south. It was a victory that astonished the whole world with the heroism and tenacity of the Soviet fighters.

The road that stretches in front of us is free. Only occasional cars have passed in this sector, and we are among the first to drive along the shore of Lake Ladoga by this road. The last fifty mines were removed only last night. More than four thousand have been removed around Schlüsselburg. On the right there is a deep, snow-filled depression with a high bank beyond, and beyond the bank there is another depression. These are the old Ladoga canals. Here and there the black hull of a boat, a small tug or a barge, juts out of the snow, and occasionally there are little bridges. The thick layer of snow on the bank is without a single mark. There is no sign of a human being in this wild open space. Only fat, bluish-black ravens, which have been feasting on the dead, fly noiselessly in flocks without a caw over the bluish wilderness. The silence of ancient times lies on either side of the road. This used to be the country of fishermen, rural craftsmen, potters, pilots and dockers. In the summer it had a busy life. In the winter lorries drove along the road, the snow crunched under the sledges of the collective farms, and peat diggers from the workers' settlements went into town. The Germans drove the spirit of life from these places.

We are now driving through a neutral zone, because the troops of both the Leningrad and the Volkhov fronts are fighting further to the south. Suddenly there looms in front of us at the cross-roads a figure in a well-fitting short fur coat with the armlet of a traffic-controller on the sleeve, which comes towards us. We see a face reddened with the cold, a pair of merry eyes, precise gestures. She is a girl traffic-controller of the Volkhov front. On the banks of the canal on the left are the cottages of the village of Lipka which was captured by the troops of the Volkhov front. We can go straight on to Moscow if we want to. The way is free!

The forests and swamps south of Lake Ladoga are wild and melancholy. In the summer a man who, is unacquainted with the

paths across the swamps may get drowned here or sink in the peat and moss bogs. Dense undergrowth prevents you going far into the woods. There is no way of finding your bearings. All bogs are alike. In the winter they do not all freeze to the bottom. On the stony hills the Germans constructed a whole line of strong-points, and when the Volkhov soldiers attacked these fortified lines they had to go up to their knees in snow, fighting day and night, and camping in snow-drifts, where the commanders and soldiers sat round the camp fire.

Ferocious battles took place here in severe weather and the icy wind off Lake Ladoga. Here the strength of the Russian soldier and the quality of our artillery were proved once again. Attacked with deadly fire, the Germans fled in panic across the glades, but they were mown down by the terrific barrage and collapsed among the broken machines and shattered guns. The Germans had constructed dug-outs which they had fitted out with all sorts of things from the villages—furniture, utensils, blankets, pillows, doors, windows, stoves and whatever they needed. They made themselves comfortable, but all these underground dwellings were filthy and lousy to the last degree. They did not get far when they fled from these dug-outs. Our men saw to that. But even in flight the Germans tried to be cunning. The captured chief of a labour camp admitted that they had a heavy battery in full working order in the forest in case they should happen to return. But there is no chance of its 'happening.' The battery, like all the enemy divisions stationed in this area, has ceased to exist. The cunning scheme was a failure.

But this is also the scene of another German atrocity. It is an enormous pit, the bottom is covered with snow, and snowdrifts are piling up on it. The edge of the pit is rimmed with barbed wire higher than a man, and the ends are twisted together and point upwards. In the corner of the pit are plywood sheds with a back wall and roof of plywood and no side walls. It all looked like a cage for some wild animal in a zoo. Our prisoners of war were kept in this pit in the winter. The men were thrown into it by the Germans to meet a slow, certain death. Your eyes refuse to believe what they see. But the rags half buried in the snow, the remnants of footwear and other refuse bear witness to the fact that not long ago men were being kept in this plywood shed. They were on the point of death when our men found them.

Sights of this kind increase the fury of our soldiers and fill them with hatred. They feel they want to kill the dead Germans a second time, stab them with an aspen stake, burn them and scatter the ashes in the wind. The Volkhov troops had to do a lot of hard fighting, but they went forward with the task of liberating Leningrad and overcame all obstacles. There were no deserters and no cowards. The spoils

of their victory can be seen on all sides. Here is a long column of abandoned motor vehicles, and over there a battery. Here are heaps of cartridges in plaited straw cases, and dumps of stores abandoned by the enemy.

Clad in fur jackets, warm caps and felt boots, our soldiers pass by the frozen German bodies and look at them with disgust. The Germans are dressed anyhow: soldiers in ankle-boots, officers in knee-boots. Their heads are swathed in scarves or rags. Blankets are wrapped over the greatcoats under their white cloaks, and straw twisted round their boots. Some of them have ersatz felt-boots or thick gaiters, as though they were not the legs of a soldier but of an old man suffering from rheumatism. They fought with the desperation of trapped bandits. When some of our soldiers spent a night in the German dug-outs, the area was heavily bombarded. They could not make out who was directing the fire. A search was made in all the nooks of this warren and resulted in the discovery of a wireless operator with a distorted, evil face, who thought he would save himself by getting the Germans to fire on to the dug-outs and oblige our men to go away, so that he could then make his escape. He did not escape, and the fire ceased as suddenly as it had begun.

If you stand on a huge mound overlooking the wide, peaty plain, which is intersected by hundreds of ditches and the tracks of narrow-gauge railways, you see before you the gloomy terrain of the fighting. The hum of engines and the roar of explosions fills the cold wintry leaden sky. Air battles go on without ceasing. The dark puffs of smoke from the anti-aircraft shells hang as though frozen on the heavy clouds, the lower edge of which, like a piece of polished metal, reflects the rainbow spectrum of the ferocious fire on the ground.

A major whom I know showed me a silver goblet and said: "You know, this is no ordinary goblet. Last winter, when it was so bad in Leningrad, I heard by chance when I was in town that a girl was dying next door. I went to see her, and it seemed to buck her up. She said: 'Now I can die peacefully, as I've had this talk in my last moments with one of the defenders of our city.' I sent for the doctors and did all I could to help. The girl got better. Through my brother, who is working in Leningrad, I got this goblet on my birthday, with a note saying: 'Will you accept this as a keepsake and a pledge of the day when we shall meet again in liberated Leningrad and drink to victory.' I'm taking great care of it, and I'm sure we shall meet again in a Leningrad that has been completely freed."

The blockade has been broken, but the siege has not been lifted. We have still to go on breaking down the German web of steel, which the brown dwarfs have woven around the great city. But the way out and into Leningrad is already clear on the Ladoga side. The thick

forest shudders with the roar of the explosions. Red strands pass among the trees. A small steady light burns on a tree like a mysterious forest signal. It is an electric globe which has been fitted up to serve as a guide for night firing. In the bushes there are huge gleaming white boulders with long cannon sticking out of them. They are not really boulders. They are tanks in battle position. Automatic-riflemen pass noiselessly by like ghosts. Two steps away their white jackets blend with the snowdrifts.

A night battle is going on. But this is no longer the Volkhov front. This is the Leningrad front again. They are now indivisible, brother-fronts. Beyond the forest lies a bush-covered plain, which is lit up with the flashes of bursting bombs and shells. The Germans are sending up rockets. The forests are alive with the nocturnal battle, whose intenseness is measured by the scout creeping along through the hollows and snowdrifts, and in the staff officer's dug-out, by the illuminated arrows on the maps which mark the movements of our units.

Behind all this nocturnal intenseness there is a word to which the soldiers and commanders keep returning in the depth of their thought: that word is victory. It was gained at the cost of ferocious fighting, but they are now on the left bank of the river, and whole caravans of vehicles are passing over the ice of the Neva, soldiers are coming from the rear and going to the rear, and traffic-controllers are directing traffic on the bank where a month ago not a soul could have stood up and lived. Everyone moves freely about the liberated Neva country and carries on the struggle, remembering that the blockade has been broken but not lifted. To win full freedom for the great city is our task, our duty and our aim. Nevertheless, it is a great joy even to-day to realize that the Leningrad-Volkhov road is free, that you can now go from Leningrad to Moscow or any other town in the Union, and that the ring of the blockade has been broken. And when our car again approaches Leningrad at night, we feel this joy with redoubled force.

THE EPIC OF LENINGRAD

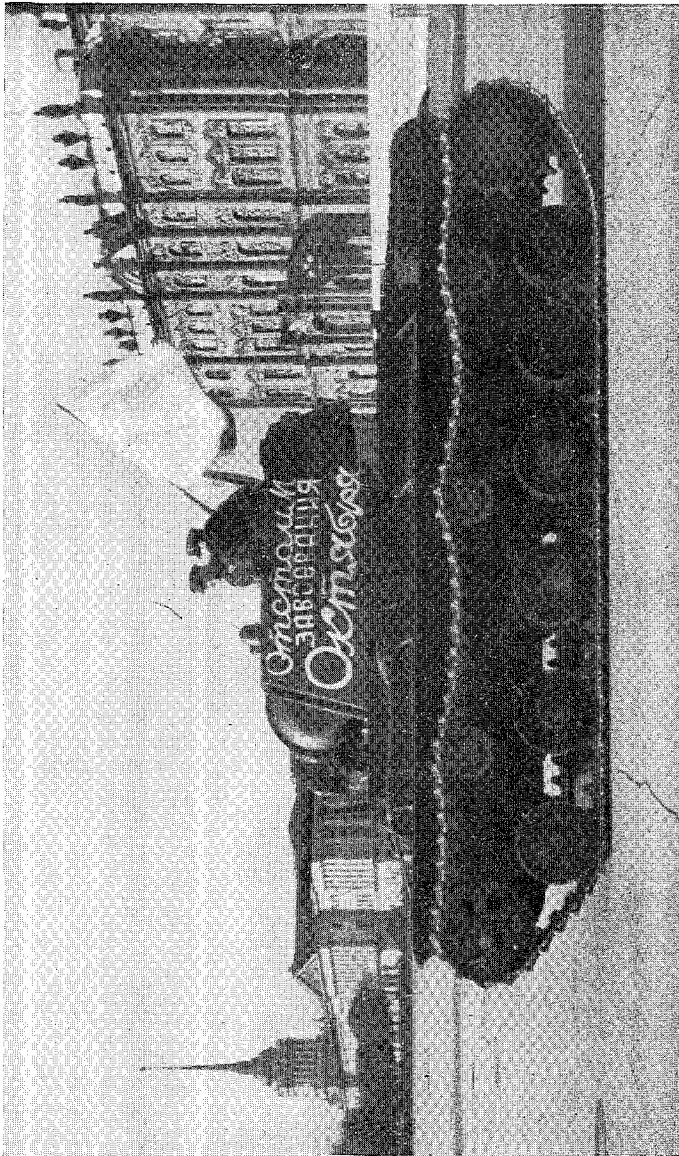
By Major-General K. Kulik

THE blow which has been dealt at the Germans south of Lake Ladoga has echoed through the world like a clap of thunder. No wonder, for the present advance of our troops crowns the heroic defence of Leningrad.

History will note that it was on the outskirts of Leningrad that a severe set-back was given to the German army, which had reckoned



A. Zhdanov Presenting Decorations to Guerillas of the Leningrad District



A Leningrad Tank Leaving for the Front

on crushing our country with a single lightning blow in 1941. Since then the Germans have failed to get a step nearer to the city. Having been unsuccessful in storming Leningrad, the German Generals thought they would stifle it with the blockade. They did everything in their power to achieve this object, but here again their devilish plans were doomed to failure.

How many times has the mad Hitler shrieked to the whole world that Leningrad was bound to fall very soon! But Leningrad held out. And the forest of crosses on the graves of the Fascist monsters destroyed by the defenders of the great city grew thicker and thicker.

The Germans considered their positions outside Leningrad to be impregnable. During the long months of the siege they created a strongly fortified area with a ramified system of permanent ferro-concrete defences and a great number of anti-tank and anti-infantry obstacles. Moreover, the German fortifications were based on exceedingly advantageous natural obstacles on the left bank of the Neva, i.e., in the sector where our troops broke through.

Here the Germans had before them an entirely open expanse of water up to eight hundred yards in width. Even when frozen the river was an exceedingly strong barrier, as there were no means of taking cover on the ice. The whole of it was under observation and covered by fire from the steep bank the enemy occupied. The height of the bank in the sector of the break-through is from fifteen to thirty-six feet, and the Germans had strengthened this natural barrier with a network of barbed wire entanglements reaching right out on to the ice, and with mine-fields, etc.

Right along the bank of the Neva were two and three lines of trenches, linked together with communication passages with firing points, strong points and block-houses with loopholes. On every mile of the front the enemy had up to twenty-two firing points, which covered the river with dense fire at many levels. In the depths of the defences the Germans converted every inhabited point into a powerful centre of resistance.

Giving enormous importance to the blockade of Leningrad, the German High Command concentrated their crack regiments there. They brought up to the walls of Leningrad S.S. and police divisions, formed of Hitler's most ferocious cut-throats. In the autumn, under the influence of their temporary successes in the south, the Germans again began to cherish the plan of taking Leningrad by storm. They transferred to this front the units which had been operating at Sevastopol and were considered to be the most experienced in capturing fortified towns (in particular the 170th infantry division, which occupied the sector on the left bank of the Neva).

If in spite of everything the enemy's defences failed to hold out

and were pierced by the mighty ram of the Soviet attack, this was not due to any local miscalculation or oversight on the part of the Germans. It was their general miscalculation, fatal to the Hitlerites, which showed itself here. They had not reckoned with the unshakable steadfastness and inexhaustible courage of the Soviet people, their patriotism and capacity for fighting. The success of our troops south of Lake Ladoga bears witness once again to the great wisdom of the plans of the Supreme Command directed by Stalin, which have been energetically carried out on our front under the direction of Andrei Zhdanov, whom the soldiers and workers of the city affectionately call the soul of the defence of Leningrad.

The battles to break the blockade of Leningrad have shown how our army has matured and hardened in the course of the war. They have clearly demonstrated the enormous power of modern armaments, with which the workers of Leningrad and the whole Soviet country have abundantly equipped our army.

In this connection it is not without interest to note the statements of numerous German prisoners captured by us in the battles on the Neva. Wilhelm Lomayer, a soldier of the 401st regiment of the 170th infantry division, stated: "I still can't forget the impression I received from the deadly fire of the Russian guns. Whenever I think of all that hellish roar and the explosions of the shells and mines I can't help trembling all over."

Unter-offizier Joseph Behler, of the 227th artillery regiment, stated: "I am an artilleryman, but before this attack I never saw anything like such devastating fire."

Johann Badzura, of the 151st regiment of the 61st division, declared: "I never thought the Russians had so many first-class automatic weapons or that Leningrad had them at its disposal, as we were told it was like a wilderness."

The period of relative calm which preceded our attacks was used by the High Command to perfect the battle training of the units of the Leningrad front. The soldiers not only learnt to master their weapons, but were also trained systematically in the actions they were to engage in when attacking, and in the complicated and peculiar conditions of our section of the front. The experience of the best Russian army leaders was drawn upon in the organization of this preparatory training.

It is known how carefully and systematically Suvorov trained his troops before storming Izmail, and how Brusilov prepared his armies before breaking through the Austro-German front. Having made copies of the enemy's positions in the rear, they taught the soldier

day by day how to overcome these fortifications. This routine work, which may seem dull at first sight, was one of the basic reasons for the brilliant success in the battles.

The attack from our front was to begin by forcing the broad frozen river. Then it was necessary to storm the steep, fortified bank held by the Germans, behind which lay a forest. For the training of the troops similar places were chosen—frozen lakes with high banks—and the soldiers overcame them dozens of times in the exercises, till the necessary dash and swiftness of movement were acquired.

It was to be expected that the Germans would smash the ice of the river with shells. To meet this contingency the troops were equipped with the appropriate means for bridging shell holes and gaps in the ice. Ladders and hooks to facilitate the scaling of a steep bank were used time after time in the exercises, so that their use in battle was already a matter of habit. The soldiers were also trained in the way to get guns up a steep bank and in many other things that might be necessary in breaking through the enemy's defences. All the details of the clothing and equipment of the soldiers were also thought out in order to ensure the rapid forcing of the barrier.

The time spent on training was repaid with interest in the battle. Our advance units forced the river and scaled the enemy's bank with dash and smartness. This ensured success and saved the lives of many soldiers and commanders. Thus the Guardsmen of the N. unit crossed the river in less than ten minutes, sustaining inconsiderable losses. The glorious Guardsmen carried out their battle task in a brilliant manner. They were the first to break through the enemy's blockade of Leningrad.

In comparing the battles which took place on the outskirts of Leningrad in the autumn and winter of 1941, in the summer and autumn of 1942 and at the beginning of the present year, we realize what great strides our commanders have made in the art of warfare.

In the battles on the Neva the gunners gave a good account of themselves. Their assault on the enemy's fortifications was exceptionally powerful and precise. A devastating whirlwind of explosions raged in the front area and in the depth of the enemy's defences, annihilating the Germans' man-power, firing points, batteries, observation posts, trenches and dug-outs. Many German units, especially those that were in the front area, were utterly destroyed. The enemy's firing system was disorganized. Thanks to this our units were able to force the river in broad daylight, that is to say, at what the enemy considered the least likely time for our attack.

According to a captured officer—Captain Steirer, of the 1st battalion

of the 401st infantry regiment—the Germans were aware of the possibility of our active operations in this sector. They were nervous, increased the sentries, kept extra observation over their front area at night and especially at daybreak, when in their opinion we were most likely to strike. So it was also on the night of January 12th. But when the dawn came and all was quiet the Germans felt reassured and a considerable part of the garrisons of the firing points went off to bed. Then our artillery opened fire. The torrent of shells immediately interrupted communications, upset the control and made it impossible to approach the front area from the depth of the German defences. In this way the suddenness of the onslaught achieved its effect completely, and this fact played a great role in the subsequent success.

Many of our general army commanders in the course of recent battles have successfully adopted bold manoeuvres, by-passing, surrounding, blockading enemy nests of resistance. These operations, as a rule, made it possible to achieve success more quickly and with fewer losses than in the case of frontal attacks.

It was no mere accident that in these battles the first promotions were made to the Order of Suvorov, the Order of Kutuzov and the Order of Alexander Nevsky, honours which are bestowed on commanders who have displayed great skill in army leadership. The Order of Suvorov of the 1st degree was bestowed on Colonel-General Govorov, in command of the Leningrad front, and the Order of Kutuzov of the 1st degree on Major-General Dukhanov, whose troops distinguished themselves in breaking through the blockade. The Order of Suvorov of the 3rd degree was awarded Guards-Captain Efimenko, Guards-Colonel Kojhevnikov, Lieutenant-Colonel Seredin, Guards-Captain Sobakin and others. The Order of Alexander Nevsky was awarded Guards-Lieutenant Snizhko and Lieutenant Stepanov. Their operations fully revealed the battle maturity of our commanders.

Breaking the stubborn resistance of the enemy, the battalion under the command of Guards-Captain Sobakin led the van of the attacking troops. More than once Comrade Sobakin boldly attacked the numerically superior enemy. The captain had confidence in his forces and in his men, and consequently he acted resolutely and with daring. In the morning of January 18th his soldiers came up against a German regiment. Our battalion was already pretty well exhausted after seven days' intense fighting and the Germans were more numerous than the Leningrad troops, but the firing of the soldiers of the Volkhov front approaching from the other direction could already be heard from beyond the enemy's positions. Captain Sobakin knew that one more effort had to be made and then the historic moment of the breaking of the blockade would arrive. He boldly moved his battalion into the

attack. He struck firmly and with vigour. The German regiment was unable to stand up to the impetuous attack, and the bold battalion was the first to link up with the Volkhov men on the memorable day of January 18th, 1943.

The capture of Schlüsselburg, in which the sub-division under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Seredin distinguished itself, may serve as an example of the skilful operational work of our commanders. The Germans had strongly fortified the town on the side of the Neva and Lake Ladoga. It was defended on the south by powerful fortifications which the enemy had constructed on the Preobrazhensky hill. However, our troops did not attack the town either from the Neva side or from the Ladoga side. Approaching from the rear, they drove a wedge in between Schlüsselburg and the Preobrazhensky hill, which they quickly captured, and then burst into the southern quarter of the town.

Soon another unit, in which many young Leningrad men were fighting, advanced towards Schlüsselburg. They fought fiercely and with great spirit, blockading and capturing the German fortifications. The greater part of the Schlüsselburg garrison was destroyed or captured by our troops.

There is no end to the names of the heroes who won eternal fame in the battles for Leningrad. This glorious list has greatly increased in the recent battles. Literally every hour brought news of exploits that were worthy to become popular legends. And in this connection the first place rightfully belongs to the infantry Guardsmen of the N. unit and the tank Guardsmen.

Captain Alexander Salnikov, the deputy commander in the political branch, immortalized his name. At a critical moment, when the Germans attacked in great strength and threatened to overwhelm our unit, Salnikov brought up reserves to meet the enemy and was himself the first to rush forward.

Noticing that a machine-gunner had been knocked out, the Captain lay down at the machine-gun himself and a torrent of lead began once again to lash the German lines. At the head of the troops Salnikov burst into a trench and overwhelmed the Germans with grenades, tommy-gun fire and well-aimed pistol-shots. He was wounded several times, but his intense activity prevented him noticing it.

When his ammunition gave out, Salnikov rushed at the Germans, using his bayonet and rifle-butt. A Fascist gave him a burst with his tommy-gun at point-blank range. Six bullets went through the hero's body. Death was already beginning to glaze his eyes, but he could

still see the German who was firing at him. Mustering his last ounce of strength, the valiant soldier rushed at the enemy and choked him with his fast-numbing hands. His comrades found him lying dead in the trench with his cold hands still gripping the throat of the strangled German.

Another memorable exploit was that of Red Army soldier Molod-zov, who, like Salnikov, had the determination to turn his own death into a victory over the enemy. A group of our soldiers broke through to a German heavy battery position. Our men were already quite close to the enemy's guns, but a strong point barred their way.

Molod-zov crawled forward, reached the strong point and threw several grenades inside. But apparently not all the Germans were killed. The machine-gun, which was thought to have been put out of action, began firing again, but Molod-zov no longer had any grenades at hand. Meanwhile every second was precious, and Molod-zov dashed right up to the loophole and blocked the deadly aperture with his body.

The soldiers saw this, and rushed forward as though swept up by a whirlwind. The German battery was captured, and the attackers continued their advance. For this immortal exploit Dmitri Molod-zov was awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union.

Boldness combined with skill is capable of working miracles—this is confirmed by the great number of remarkable deeds performed by the defenders of Leningrad. In the course of battle Captain Efimenko and his thirteen companions unexpectedly came up against large German forces. They were outnumbered ten to one. But Efimenko realized that the Germans were not expecting to be attacked, and he promptly poured a storm of bullets into them from every Tommy-gun and machine-gun he had. Scores of Germans were knocked out without having had time to realize who was firing at them or where the fire was coming from. The battle did not last long, in spite of the exceptional inequality of the forces engaged. Boldness and initiative won a truly exceptional victory: fourteen Soviet soldiers littered the earth with scores of German bodies and took many soldiers and officers prisoner.

All the various arms of the Red Army won new glory in the battles outside Leningrad. Here is the exploit of a gunner, Senior Lieutenant Semionov and his comrades-in-arms. Having gone out to the forward position to correct the range, Semionov noticed several German guns and enemy soldiers bustling about them not far away. He called up a squad of his gunners and led them in a spirited attack. The blow was so unexpected that the Hitlerites abandoned their guns and fled. Semionov turned the guns round in the direction of the enemy and gave orders to open fire on the Germans.

The tanks had to operate in very difficult conditions. It was difficult for a tank to force the ice and to fight in deep snow, but the Soviet tankmen overcame all these obstacles.

Tank Captain Tuparev imperturbably drove his tank into the very thick of the enemy's positions. He ironed out the trenches and dug-outs and shot up the Hitlerites, who bolted out in panic. Three anti-tank guns tried to knock out his machine, but he operated quicker than the Germans. He destroyed all three guns and went further on, making a breach in the enemy's defences. He smashed an enemy trench mortar and killed its crew, destroyed four machine-gun posts, flattened out two dug-outs and exterminated more than thirty Fascists.

Our airmen dominated the air and prevented the German aircraft from bombing and shooting up the attacking Soviet troops, and they themselves inflicted heavy losses on the enemy.

The group of fighter planes under the command of Guards-Captain Belyaev protected our land units. Ten Junkers 88s and Messerschmidt 110s made their appearance. Belyaev led his machines to meet the enemy, rushed at the leading plane and shot it down. Then he set fire to a second Junkers. This was the twelfth Fascist plane shot down by this brave Guardsman during the war.

Thus in fierce and bloody battles the Soviet soldiers are writing the history of the victories of the Red Army with the fire of their weapons. Thus the warriors of Leningrad are fulfilling their sacred duty to the great city, whose defence has been entrusted to them by the Motherland.

Forward to the west—that is our only road, and along it we will achieve more glorious successes under the leadership of our Supreme Commander, our own beloved leader, the great and wise Stalin.

Leningrad Front.

LENINGRAD, 1943

By Nikolai Tikhonov

JANUARY

WHEREAS in January last year the inhabitants of Leningrad lived like Arctic explorers, hibernating in darkness and cold, mustering all their will-power and firmly determined to put up with everything and survive till the spring brought warmth and light again, sometimes having to summon their last ounce of strength to carry on the daily work for the front and the city, it was a different people in quite a different mood who greeted January this year.

The city was living a rigorous, austere life in want and anxiety, but there was already a presentiment not of the calendar spring, still a long way off, but of a secret, deep-seated confidence that there would soon be a change, that the long, laborious succession of trials was coming to an end and that events were about to take a turn for the better. And this knowledge made the work go faster, made everything more cheerful, so that even the children's Christmas trees seemed to shine more brightly.

And suddenly, on the historic night of January 18th, the Leningraders heard news from the front which the wireless repeated three times, and then it became clear to everybody that the long-awaited thing had happened—the blockade had been broken! All night long in the city nobody slept, the radio broadcast the whole night through and songs and music filled the air.

It is difficult for anyone who did not live in Leningrad in the days of the blockade to understand the feelings which filled the hearts of the inhabitants. All through the night the telephones rang, people talked in the flats and meetings were held in the workshops. New records were set up in the armament factories. All the people got out their flags and hung them out on their houses, so that in the morning the whole city might be ablaze with red bunting. Everybody's thoughts turned to the men at the front, and the city itself, its splendid buildings, sparkling with frost patterns, rose up in new beauty. Shoulders were straightened, eyes shone. Everyone wanted to know the details, everyone spoke at once.

In the dark, far-off days of the autumn of 1941 hundreds of thousands of Leningrad citizens joined the army to defend their city.

And they defended it. To-day it is a question of liberating it, and again a great number of them are fighting to set their city entirely free. Everywhere you meet people you know.

Here is a commander who fought in the Shimsky forests, and you will find out from him who is alive and who has already died a hero's death. Here is a girl with an axe in her hand, her face smudged with tar. She had been working in the House of the Red Army. And now a typist calls you by your name as she taps out a communiqué while the gun-fire roars incessantly. She has altered so much that you fail to recognize her at first, and then you remember she used to work as a typist in the Writers' Union. Here is a commander whose poetry is published in the Leningrad newspapers. He has a Guardsman's badge and a dark-red ribbon on the left side of his tunic.

But the Leningrad citizens are not only fighting. They have already come here to put things in order again, to fix up all the municipal services and restore transport facilities. Seamen are already bustling about the Schlüsselburg wharf, railwaymen are inspecting the lines and specialists are examining what is left of the cotton-printing factory. They are already reckoning up how much peat they have regained from the enemy and how it will help the industries of the great city. Schlüsselburg is in ruins, but the builders are ready to begin restoring it.

On the opposite bank where it was impossible for anybody to show himself before, locomotives are openly puffing out smoke and steam, and trains are running across the Neva. Over the river crossings there are long columns of vehicles, infantry detachments are on the march and the wheels of guns and the caterpillars of tanks crunch in the snow.

January, 1943, came in full of good omens for Leningrad. In the middle of the month the blockade was broken. But the people realized that the battles on the Neva were only the beginning of a great, ferocious combat. The enemy will not retreat; he must be annihilated. He will go on bombing and shelling the city even more malevolently and stubbornly. He will fight for every strong point. He can't simply go away. It is the beginning of his end and he wants to put it off as long as possible.

The methods of fighting him here are not like the ordinary ones. All along the front there are fortified defence positions and innumerable obstacles.

It is a struggle in the ramifications of an enormous fortified *place d'armes*, which it is possible to gnaw through but impossible to take with a single blow. The battle of the Neva has shown that victory lies rather with the one who uses skill.

The Leningraders know only one thing—the worst of their trials are behind them, but the most decisive battles are yet to come. Leningrad is again going into battle.

'Forward, to defeat the German invaders and drive them out of our country!' These words in the Order of the Day of Commander-in-Chief Marshal Stalin, are in all our hearts, which have been steeled in trials. Every Leningrader at the front and in the city is working to translate these words into a fact. Leningrad is going forward!

FEBRUARY

A WARM, west wind is blowing, thick mists spread over the city, there is a smell of early spring in the air. Water is streaming from the roofs, but there is a light frost towards night, and a thin, icy film over everything in the morning.

Walking past the still snow-covered fields where the vegetable plots lie under snow among the strong points, people talk like experienced gardeners about planting out, manures, the work that must be done soon, just as they did last year. People are also interested in the weather from another point of view.

"Did you hear what they said on the wireless?" says one to another. "In Uzbekistan they're already planting out new fruit trees. It's spring in the south."

"It's the proper time in Uzbekistan," replies the other. "But did you read the report from the Ukraine that the mud of the black earth region is clogging the tracks of the tanks?"

Leningrad people have grown accustomed to consider themselves the right flank of the great battle and to take a special interest in everything that concerns the front from sea to sea. The Neva and the Dnieper are equally near to them.

A year and a half of fighting for Leningrad has made a great change in the people. Even the most unlikely man has found his place in the course of the struggle and I was sincerely astonished when I discovered that one man, a specialist in languages, almost a professor, who could hardly do a day's march, had joined the militia at the age of forty-one and was to-day already head of a whole section at advanced headquarters and was working like an experienced military specialist. I know another Leningrad man, an aesthete, a connoisseur of the fine arts, who became an expert scout, operating with hand-grenade and rifle, who brought back many a Jerry from his trips.

Leningrad, whose population is as numerous as that of some entire European countries, has thrown up many soldiers and com-

manders who in peace time did not even suspect they could master the complicated and erudite science of modern warfare so quickly. But they did so. The Germans piled up fortifications round Leningrad as if their fear obliged them to fence themselves off from the great city and its avenging warriors, but not all these concrete cellars, fields of barbed wire and tricky minefields will help them.

Recently our soldiers captured a big centre of resistance, which the Germans had converted into a fortress. The approaches to it from all sides were strongly fortified. It was surrounded with high embankments, the buildings were turned into strong points, and the main structure was covered with ferro-concrete to protect it against the heaviest bombardment. Yet this fortified point was captured, and not by picked troops such as the Guards, but by ordinary units, who had learnt how to fight and were eager to defeat and annihilate the enemy.

The tram was crowded. A commander got in and stood on the platform among the young lads and women with their shopping bags. Four soldiers who were sitting behind him exchanged glances. The passengers gazed with curiosity at the commander's epaulets. This was in the days when epaulets were a novelty. The soldiers who had exchanged glances got up as one man, and began to offer their seats to the passengers.

"Are you getting out here?" the passengers asked.

"No, we are going farther on," the soldiers replied.

"You've got up too soon. Sit down."

One of the soldiers replied with a smile: "We sat down too long. We were slow in standing up. We didn't notice the commander at once. We won't sit down whilst he's standing."

"So that's the reason," said the woman, as she sat down. "And quite right, too."

The tramcar comes to a stopping-place. A deafening explosion roars through the air, followed by a second and a third. The people crane their heads as some sort of coloured wads and long streamers come fluttering down on the roofs of the houses from the shells that had burst high up. They are German leaflets. The Germans had given up appealing to the Leningraders with leaflets, and now the filthy papers were fluttering down again after a long interval. What was the use of such stupidity? The leaflets talk about something that is really inconceivable. Have the Germans gone off their heads? No, they are dropping leaflets dating back to the autumn of 1942. Nobody knows what it means.

There is something characteristic of the enemy in this bombardment

with last year's leaflets. A great weariness and indifference are evident in this senseless action.

But the city goes on living and working, and is constantly adding to its business and increasing its achievements. It maintains its contact with the country more firmly than ever, and in the streets of Leningrad you can meet people who have been sent on missions from the various towns of the Soviet Union, people who have come on business and returned natives who have been on a job in the country beyond Lake Ladoga.

They no longer have any narrow escapes and dramatic episodes to relate. A Leningrader was telling about his trip into the Russian 'mainland.'

"How did you get across the lake?" he was asked. "Are there any air-raid alarms?"

"Occasionally," he answered. "I was in one myself. Well, the bombs drop, and there's a hole in the ice. Then another bomb drops and there's water on the ice. Traffic-control girls, dressed in white, signal with yellow and red flags, and call out to you: 'That way—this way: there's no road. A bomb has broken the ice. Bear to the right.' That's all, and you just keep going."

The bread ration in the city has been increased. The workers are getting 600 grammes, clerical workers 500, dependents and children 400 grammes. Heavy workers and engineers in armament factories get 700 grammes.

Patrol planes are flying over the city, and red flags fluttering over the houses. To-day is February 23rd, Red Army Day. It was in the Smolny Institute here that the Decree establishing the Red Army was signed. Its first detachments marched through these streets. Here stand the tall chimneys of the famous factories whose sirens gave the alarm on that far-off February night when the German aggressors started their first campaign against our city.

Yudenitch stumbled over the very same block as that which broke the neck of the German Fascist General Rundstedt. In Leningrad's regiments to-day there are soldiers and commanders who were among the first Red Army men and remember the battles for the October Revolution and Petrograd, fighting under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin.

The Red Army demonstrated its growth every year in the October and May parades, marching in close formation across the historic square, which is now deserted and silent. But there is not a corner of the city where the Red Army Day has not been celebrated and where Stalin's order has not been read with grave attention. Every word of

this order speaks with the utmost force of the strength of the Red Army, the skill of its commanders, and how and why the Germans have grown weak and we have grown stronger.

This order is read over several times in every home, because every line of it is the truth about the war. It contains our yesterday, our to-day and our to-morrow.

'The mass expulsion of the enemy from the Soviet Union has begun.' How much there is in this line that warms the heart of every Russian and every Leningrader. Every Leningrad family has men at the front. Every Leningrader is working for the defence. He worked in the most difficult days without asking when the day of victory would come, and clenching his teeth, tried to do his work as best he could. But now he feels a great joy. The Red Army is advancing. The Red Army is liberating our native soil. It is going forward to the west.

Air raid wardens are keeping watch on the roof-tops. They can see a long way. They can even see the frozen Gulf, where yellow flashes gleam in the distant haze. Kronstadt and the ships are speaking in the thunderous language they have always used to the enemies of our country. The spotters can also see the other shore, where all these girls and lads who have taken part in the seventeen months' battle used to go on holidays to picnic by the fountains in the old park or sail in yachts whose white sails bellied in the stiff breeze from the Baltic.

The enemy is still out there, and Stalin's order is an imperative call to drive him out. There are ruins out there instead of palaces, ugly stumps instead of ancient trees, and a black wilderness from which the German shells come flying into the city. But a day will come, and it is not far off. The North will begin to speak with the language of the South. The Leningraders will again walk over the sacred soil of their ancestors, and to-day's Order of our great leader is the forerunner of that day of vengeance and final victory.

Five hundred days of fighting at the gates of Leningrad have turned the inhabitants into stalwart, confident warriors, who will achieve their object—they will wipe out the Germans, as they have been wiped out at Stalingrad, on the Don and in the foot-hills of the Caucasus.

The men of the Red Army did not become experienced and hardened soldiers all at once. They had to go through the test of great battles to become the men who are now the admiration of the whole freedom-loving world. No difficulties are too great for them now. "We're armour-plated," said a Leningrader, laughing. "Splinters glance off us as they do off tanks."

This man had a flat in an old house with strong, thick walls that went back to the days of the Tsarina Elizabeth. He had a splendid library,

every book of which had been lovingly chosen. During the raid a bomb fell near by, but the walls stood firm. He cleared up the fragments and broken furniture, put his flat in order and went on with his life and work. A second bomb shook the house. It stood up to that one as well, but all the doors were crooked and all the windows blown out. It became rather difficult to live there, but the Leningrader carried on. One day a shell struck the house, and it became practically impossible to live there.

My friend shifted his headquarters, as he called it, and went to live in another district, dropping in from time to time to rummage among the debris for such books and things as he needed. The next shelling caused a fire, but the house kept its chin up and refused to succumb to the flames. The firemen came and put out the fire. But, as you may well imagine, the house was no longer the same.

For a long time my friend did not visit his old home, but remembering a favourite book, he decided to get into the house and look for it. Perhaps it had survived! When the house was on fire, the firemen had been very generous with the water, and in looking for the book he had now to walk over a thick layer of ice which covered the parquet floor. The book was not in the bookcase. Suddenly he caught sight of it lying under the transparent ice through which he could read every word on the open pages.

The book was there all right, but it could be read only through this chill, bluish barrier. It was like some fairy tale. Sunlight flooded the room through the shell holes in the ceiling and the walls, and getting down on his knees, this man of Leningrad read the open pages with varied and intense emotion.

In this fabulous fact, which is true as reality, there is the wisdom of a parable. Through the ice-wall of hardships we can see the book of our future, and we are breaking through the barrier. We will smash it and turn another page of the book on the day of our victory.

MARCH

THE oldest inhabitant does not remember such an early spring. From the tall observation towers you can see an ocean of pale-red roofs which have not had a coat of paint for a long time, and only here and there, around the chimneys on the north side, are there a few patches of dirty snow. The pavements are clean and the whole city is busy breaking up the ice in the court-yards and on the roadways. On Sundays when whole districts turn out for spare-time work, lorry after lorry carries away piles of the heavy lumps of ice and tips them into the

canals. Fat, well-fed sparrows are chirping already in the trees as in April. The extraordinary sunsets over the bay are girdled with streaks of tender green, blue and mother-of-pearl. At night the stars are huge, white as white, and the red stars of the bursting anti-aircraft shells fly towards them. On all sides stretch aloft the transparent, hazy beams of the searchlights, criss-crossing and intertwining and suddenly gleaming with sharp, clear edges. A solitary pedestrian in the deserted streets stops and involuntarily admires the unusual spectacle. The air is light and transparent, and the rumble of distant gun-fire comes on the breeze. He listens, stands and gazes a while and then calmly goes home.

It has all become a usual, commonplace thing. On the hills to the north there are undisturbed pine-forests, quiet trenches and strong points. The sound of firing or the drone of an engine is seldom heard there. Blear-eyed Finns sit in the deep dug-outs with their wits dulled by the endless war. They curse the Germans and read letters from home telling them that the little village has already lost two-thirds of its menfolk. They are lying in their graves. What is going to happen? They set about abusing the Germans. Deserters relate this in a listless way and sing songs that are popular in their army, containing venomous references to the Hitlerites, to whom the Schutz corps have sold Finland.

But to the south of Leningrad there are the Germans. Beyond the silent ruins of heroic Kolpino rising up in the pale spring night, and beyond the pounded marshes and shattered forests, the gun-fire never ceases. The Germans shell these areas day and night. Day and night the air here is full of hissing and whining shells. Planes tear across the front, drop their bombs in a hurry and bolt back home, followed by our fighters, and flames and flashes light up the enemy's rear and explosions roar. Scouts go out on reconnaissance, sappers clear away the mines from passages through the barbed wire entanglements, gunners fire point-blank at the enemy. Wet, tired scouts bring back captured Fritzes and pour out on to the table iron crosses and all sorts of badges taken from the killed. There is no end to the variety! There are badges for Crete, for the Crimea, for Staraya Russa, and a Rumanian medal. The bronze rubbish lies in a heap on the table in the dug-out, and the human rubbish squirms under the fixed gaze of the stern Soviet soldiers. The Fritzes relate how they came from France and how they were attacked by partisans. One fat, dirty Fritz says that three Russian women are working in his beerhouse in Hanover.

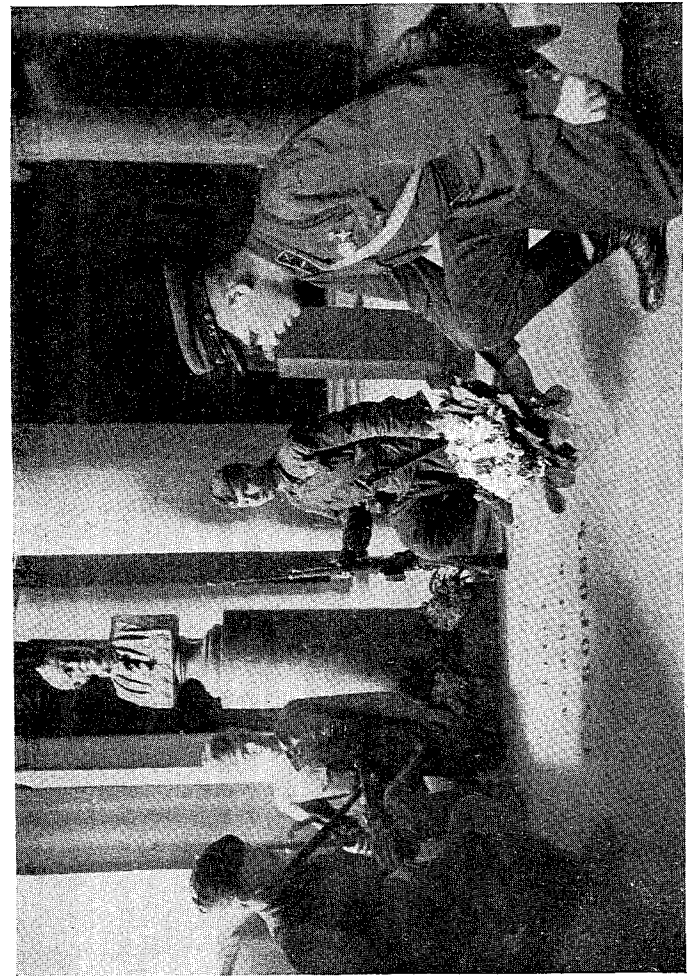
"You mean they're working as slaves?" someone asked him.

"Yes, of course, as slaves," he replied with the dull-witted automatism of an idiot.

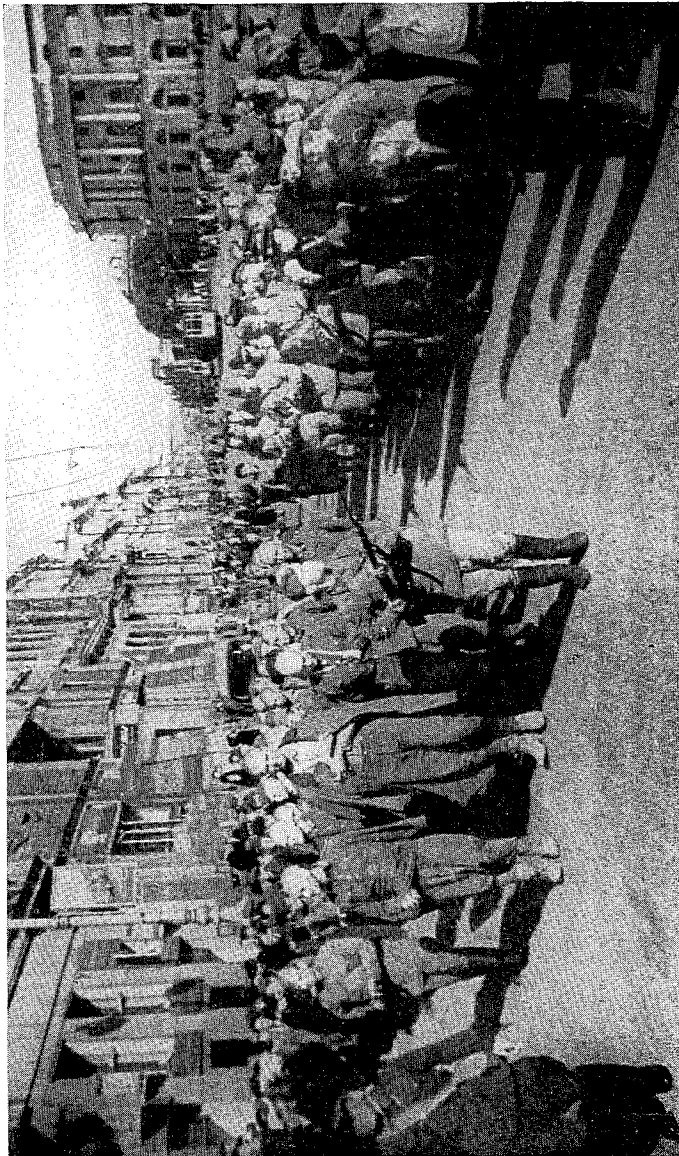
The soldiers seethe with fury. They stare with the utmost contempt at this wretched slave-owner. He stands there alive, disgusting to look at, and empty as a beer barrel from his own tavern. His jaw has dropped in terror and his mouth dribbles saliva.

The factory director is unable to sleep. He paces up and down his big, warm office and stops in front of the show-case which displays samples of the factory's commonplace, peace-time output, which has nothing in common with war needs. Then he sits down at the table, re-reads the day's mail and falls into a brown study. In the quiet hours of the night he is fond of dreaming about the future and how his factory will carry on its basic work again. But how many astonishing and hectic days he can recall! He remembers last winter, when they had to go and get the fuel themselves or the work would have stopped. He had looked out of this window and seen half-fed, sleep-starved workers, old men and lads, drag beams, bundles of faggots and planks on sledges and in their arms to the factory. And friendly sailors had lent their aid and put all the heating pipes in order. The times were different, but the work went on day and night. Was there anything the factory didn't turn out? It was really one of the seven wonders of the world. You could write a story for children about it. It would be like a fairy tale.

Once upon a time there was a factory, and it turned out that there was no raw material for its basic production. They managed to get the raw material after very great difficulties. Then they began to look around to see if there was any other way in which they could be useful. There was work for the front to be done. They had never had anything to do like that before. Anyway, they turned themselves into metal workers, arranged the change-over and the front began to get what it needed. They looked round and saw there was a laboratory that had little to do, so they set that working too. They began to produce glucose. The rations were short of sugar. Where could it be got? They thought a lot, and then fixed up everything for the production of treacle. Inventiveness is something which, if you once start, lures you on further and further. What else could they help the front with? They fixed up the production of various medicines and the result was not at all bad. It was no longer a simple factory but a big plant, turning out the most varied products. Vitamins were scarce. Where could you get them in the middle of winter? Up on the seventh floor there was an enormous empty workshop with a glass roof. Why not make a greenhouse of it? They fixed up a heating system, went out to dig soil from under the snow, carried it in sacks to the workshop, got some manure, looked up the subject in the reference books and



Red Army Men Laying Flowers on Suvorov's Grave



German Prisoners in a Leningrad Street

manuals and started the forcing-beds. If you had gone up to the seventh floor when the moon was shining, you would have found yourself in a kitchen garden where twenty-eight beds of onions and garlic were calmly basking in the moonlight. It was fantastic, but how many lives were saved with those onions and garlic during the last cruel winter! Then a big farm was organized in the suburbs, the factory's own farm. Cows are being sent to it, and when they arrive the factory will have its own milk.

Thus life has taught people to find a way out of the most difficult hardships by their own efforts; they learnt the way. All you need is the will to live and to struggle. Where there's a will there's a way.

When people's clothes wore out, they opened a tailor's shop, where everyone could mend his clothes or sew new ones. They opened a boot-repair workshop. No need to go far to the baths—there are hot showers. It was no simple matter to achieve all this. If the factory is now clean and warm, it is not because it was easy to make it so. There is even a children's corner and a crèche. Children. Here the director's face was saddened as he remembered a tragic day. In the spring, the children had gone out for a walk, and the very first shell of a bombardment fell right among them. When the people came running up, the little ones were lying on the ground with torn, bleeding bodies and blood-spattered clothes. They buried them all together in a common grave. This spring they are going to erect a monument to them. After this terrible happening there was no need of any meetings. The people worked as only Leningrad people can, full of hatred for the malignant enemy who is torturing their beloved city for the second year running. Many works and factories live like this, and when their story in the unforgettable days of the national war is written, it will be such heroic literature that future generations will draw strength from it, whilst they ponder over it in amazement and admiration.

From the way this tall man with the broad face and ungainly movements looks around him and from the way he listens attentively to his companion it is obvious that he is in Leningrad for the first time. And so it turns out. He has only just arrived here on business. He is one of the defenders of Stalingrad, and even the climate puzzles him.

"What's this?" he said, pointing to the puddles. "Is it spring, or are you going to have more frost and snow? Is the winter coming back or what?"

"No," they told him. "This is our Leningrad spring. The winter is over. You see, we're a maritime city and we've got a peculiar climate.

Look at the clouds. There are no clouds like those anywhere. They come from the sea, soft, big and beautiful. There can hardly be any resemblance between our city and Stalingrad?"

But the man from Stalingrad said: "There is! To tell the truth, I thought your difficulties were exaggerated, but now I've seen for myself and met the people and talked, I can say: yes, you may compare it to Stalingrad. Of course, your difficulties are different, but you've got plenty of them. Shall I tell you an anecdote? One day the Germans dropped leaflets on Stalingrad. We looked at them. They said we were besieged and that they, the Fritzes, would starve us to death. It appears they dropped on us by mistake the leaflets that were intended for Leningrad. They made fools of themselves. The blockade of Leningrad is broken but not lifted. The time will come when we'll finish off the Germans at Leningrad. Yes, it'll be a good thing for Leningrad to resemble Stalingrad in that respect. Now that would be the stuff!"

And now everybody is going to the cinemas to see the astounding film of the defence of Stalingrad. Seemingly endless columns of Hitlerites surge forward to attack the Volga stronghold. Suddenly the whole scene changes, and yesterday's invaders, who had boasted themselves the conquerors of the mighty river, clamber out of holes and cellars waving dirty rags and giving themselves up. And their generals, headed by the ill-starred Field-Marshal von Paulus, slink like wolves from their lair, gripped in the iron ring of the Red Army. The bodies of the invaders litter the ground in countless heaps, and piles of abandoned guns, burnt-out planes and captured tanks stretch into the distance. The whole cinema roars with laughter as a Fritz in ersatz 'felt boots' made of straw plods along into captivity, and deep in every heart glows the hope that soon the Fritzes round Leningrad, too, will be caught in a deadly ring and forced to scramble out of their strong points and dug-outs with their hands over their heads bawling: "Hitler kaput!" There is a close affinity between the two cities and Leningrad is eager that the great battle on the Neva should end with a climax like that on the banks of the distant Volga.

APRIL

A CHEERFUL young woman is hurrying from work, down the boulevard, humming to herself as her heels click lightly on the pavement. On her right, behind a hedge, is a big garden where nurses in white aprons

pass to and fro among the trees. This is a base hospital, the first reminder that she is in a grim, watchful, front-line city. On her left is a park, which will soon burst into green leaves. Now, however, she can see clearly through the bare branches the pale green barrage balloons lying on the ground like whales cast up by the sea, the second reminder of the war. She quickens her step and runs towards the bridge, but as she gets to it she involuntarily pauses. Coming over the Neva is the familiar, horrible whine of the air-raid alarm! The loud-speakers give out their warning words behind her, while coming towards her and rolling through the whole city, other sirens shrill piercingly. A militiawoman stops her with a curt gesture: "You can't cross the bridge now, there's an alert!"

The two young women stand facing each other. They are different, yet there are points of resemblance, as between sisters. The young woman in the uniform and white gloves, her teeth showing in a faintly mocking smile, says: "Turn back, citizeness!"

The young woman in civvies is plucking at her handbag in distress. She has forgotten that she was just singing. She looks pleadingly at the severe servicewoman, and says in an agitated voice: "Pardon me, comrade, but I beg you, please let me pass. I'm going to the theatre and it was so hard getting a ticket, how can I waste it now?"

The militiawoman stares at her for a second, trying to keep serious, and then says sternly: "I told you I couldn't let you pass," and turns and slowly walks away.

The young woman in civvies looks at her well-fitting greatcoat, at the wide leather belt, the high boots, the curly hair tumbling from under her cap, and suddenly walks resolutely to the bridge. Once on the bridge she breaks into a run. From time to time she glances back, but the militiawoman is not looking in her direction. Having dashed across the bridge in one spurt, the young woman again becomes calm and collected, and begins to hum again. She walks through deserted side-streets and alleys, stubbornly heading for the theatre. A.A. guns are roaring deafeningly all round. Shells burst in the sky and black streaks form under the clouds. Then the firing lets up and the lone enemy plane that has broken through the barrage is driven to another sector. The young woman gets into the theatre just as the loud-speaker announces the 'All clear' in a pleasant and comforting voice.

The theatre is packed. The performance begins early, at six o'clock, which used to be the time of the last performance for children. The larger part of the audience is in uniform, the gold braid on their shoulder-straps gleaming, orders and medals decorating many tunics. They have come here straight from the line, or from hospitals; others are on business from other fronts and are taking this opportunity of visiting the Leningrad theatre. There are many young women in uniform,

many beautifully-dressed women. Practically all of them are middle-aged or younger, there are very few old or elderly people.

The actors find it extremely pleasing to play to such a full and enthusiastic house. They are giving a light comedy, based on American life, pre-war, amusing and frothy—far removed from the Leningrad of to-day. The audience laughs endlessly. People have come here to be amused and distracted, and they ask for nothing more. They applaud uproariously, and during the interval go out for a smoke and to look for acquaintances. But the interval drags on.

"What's the trouble? Do you know?"

"Just another alert, I expect."

"An alert? That's too bad. They won't begin again until it's over."

The audience, walking about the foyer in groups, standing on the steps or in the theatre exhibition room, is talking away calmly. How unlike air-raid alarms in 1941 all this is. The only reaction of the audience is a feeling of annoyance at the fact that the interval is so long. An that is all.

Two commanders who have not seen one another for six months or more meet here by chance. After hearty handshakes and back-thumping they begin questioning each other about mutual acquaintances and friends. How much news there is from both the north and the south, how much to tell!

"Did you hear about what we came across?" one of the young officers said to the other. "Once we burst into a house which the Jerries had just quit in a tearing hurry. The room was half dark and there were some sort of empty chests standing there. Hold on—there's a man in one of them. We yell, but he doesn't come out. We drag a dazed Jerry out by the legs and he mumbles something and rubs his eyes. Then we ask him in German who he is. And all he answers is: 'Where's the band? Where's the guard of honour?' We're simply furious—what the hell, has he gone off his head with fear or something? We question him sternly: 'Your name?' He answers: 'Hitler.' What kind of raving is this! There he stands like a post, his hands stiffly at his side and keeps on saying doltishly: 'Adolf Hitler.' We begin to search him, and in the lining of his boot find a paper. Of course he's not called Hitler, his name is Hans Meyer. And there's another paper from some medical institution which says that he suffers from mental aberrations and at such times usually calls himself Hitler. Beat that if you can, old chap, taking a half-wit Hitler prisoner!"

And the two young men burst out laughing.

Nearby two girls are discussing the results of last winter's ski races. A little way off two business managers are arguing the relative merits of peat and liquid fuel. Some sailors of the Merchant Marine are chatting about their last voyage. One group of young men are

quite simply there with their girl friends. The theatre has become a club, from which, however, the smokers have been driven downstairs into the vestibule, where the air is blue with tobacco smoke.

At last the cheerful sound of the 'All clear' comes and the audience flock back to their places noisily. The curtain rises and there are no more interruptions. The audience leaves the theatre and walks out into the warm dusk of the spring evening.

Watching the audience at a performance, it is hard to believe that this is happening in a city that has been in the front line for two years, so calm and confident are the Leningrad people in their stern camp life, amidst constant alarms and the utter discomfiture of long and frequent bombardments. One hour after the performance the anti-aircraft men are again at their guns, while the tankmen drive their tanks to the rendezvous that very night. The two ski-fans will think of the amusing American play on their night shift. One of the business managers is leaving for the peat fields in the morning, while high over his car an aeroplane flies north, to Kem, to Kandalaksha, carrying to the front the officer who told his friend about the German half-wit he had captured from Hitler's latest reinforcements. Life is as variegated as the war, and the war is already in its twenty-third month.

It is a quiet, mild April night and silence hangs over the city. It is a night made for lovers to walk along the Neva embankment, and then to sit dreaming at an open window. But only the hoof-beats of the mounted patrol sound in the streets. A red traffic light stops the noiseless gliding of cars. There are very many people who do not sleep at night, the night shifts in all the factories, and the numerous civil defence personnel.

The city is closely guarded—on all roads, at all approaches, there are sentries and patrols. There is no sleep at the forward position, where night is the time for difficult and intricate operations. There sappers and scouts and gunners have plenty of work cut out for them. There is no sleep in the sky—there our bombers are coming back from a night mission. It is strange to think of how many familiar names there are among these heroic fighters who do not sleep at night. You can picture to yourself the foreman of the night shift and the engineer of the factory next to your house, and a sailor you met in the daytime, and a scout who is now crawling through a mined field, and a sapper, with the iron will and the cunning skill of the Russian, silently disposing of the death concealed in small boxes called mines.

Walking over to the window and looking over the sea of roofs I catch sight of red tongues surrounded by a rosy gleam rising in the distant greenish haze of the night clouds. There is a fire, most likely

caused by a thermite shell. But there must be no fire at night over the city, it gives the enemy his bearings. The flames draw off to one side, vanish and then leap up again, like a red horse that will not let himself be bridled, tossing his head. And immediately I think of the man who is there now, who is invariably at every fire. In this man's office hang two splendid sabres, for he knows all there is to know about swordsmanship. There was a time when he rode by the side of Chapayev, flourishing his sabre and galloping ahead of the other horsemen just at the right moment, when the enemy was wavering and with one more blow would be completely routed. And to-day I can well imagine Colonel Serikov advancing into the raging flames when others hesitated and he felt he must show them how to fight the fire. The firemen of Leningrad too are among those who do not sleep at night. Their work is stubborn, dangerous and inconspicuous.

Walking over to the window again I see instead of the red tongues on the horizon only a feeble flicker. The fire is well in hand, and, although only half an hour has passed, it will soon be completely extinguished. Fire-fighting calls for speed. There is no time for lengthy cogitation, nor is guesswork any use. One must know the strength of the fire exactly, be able to place one's men swiftly and unerringly, and to carry on an offensive. Firemen do not recognize defence. They must make a swift reconnaissance and charge to the attack. If thermite shells are burning or there is a delayed action bomb in the blazing ruins, it is necessary to fight even more quickly, knowing that one is on the brink of destruction. I can clearly visualize the crowd of familiar faces, the men on the fire front; the girl runner clambering on to a burning roof with a commander's order; the man sending the jet into the vital area, who has already seen hundreds of fires; the fire fighter forging through columns of bluish black smoke, a wet pad pressed to his mouth; the man with the axe, hacking away at a wall. It makes me feel good to know them, to know their names. They are my fellow townsmen, who have been defending our native city for all of twenty-three months just like those others whom I also know, now standing at the bench and making shells, or those who are now going on patrol, or getting ready for a raid. We have all been made kin by the great struggle and a great hatred. Together we froze and starved; together we buried friends and near ones. All of us shared one sorrow, and all of us will share the longed-for day of the final freeing of the beloved city where we were born, where we lived and worked until the coming of a vile and horrible enemy.

You no longer meet the children as you once did, crowding the benches on the squares in the spring, shouting and playing merrily in

the streets, nor do you hear their ringing voices. Walking down the street nowadays you come across either leisurely-walking files of children from homes, or a few children on their way back from school. But all the same there are still many children in the city. They help their mothers who are busy, bringing in wood, cleaning up the apartment and the stairs. They watch with curiosity the water spouts made by shells falling in the Neva. They watch the rays of searchlights criss-crossing over the city at night. They hurry when a bombardment begins, they say to their mothers: "That's not in our district, Mummy." One little tot who has been dug out from under ruins three times, when asked if she had been frightened, said calmly: "No, I wasn't at all scared, only it was dark. All I did was just wait and keep on waiting for our people to come. . . ."

Children helped to put out fire bombs, collected metal scrap, packed gifts for the men at the front, wrote letters to the city's defenders, asking them to 'knock the stuffing' out of the Germans, and making excellent drawings of tanks and warships, which they know down to the last detail. They worked in brigades on allotments and won competitions against experienced gardeners. They served as runners in the A.R.P., helped to catch saboteurs during the first months of the siege and worked as signallers. Many of them wear home-made uniforms, taking the utmost pride in them, and sewing all sorts of badges on the sleeves so as to look like veterans. There are children in the children's hospital too, wounded tots, serious and suffering. Their fathers come to visit them from the front, embracing them with unconcealed agitation, these victims of the barbarous Nazi bombardments. It might be thought that the sad times would have cut short their golden childhood, that the iron days in the besieged city would have converted them into little adults. They have seen terrible things, lived through all sorts of ordeals beyond their age, but they are not at all like little old men. They have remained children, surrounded with care, attention and love.

If you want to take a look at a real children's world go to the Pioneer Palace, where a city-wide children's Olympiad is now taking place. Sturdy, rosy-cheeked, smiling children dressed in their holiday best come here from all the districts of the city, and here there is indeed a racket and uproar, ringing voices and holiday enthusiasm. The Pioneer Palace was the dream of every schoolchild before the war. It is a huge mansion, where the youngest of the young is master. It is not the same now, has become somewhat shabby both outside and in. But to-day, too, it is a harbour for this merry childhood, its halls are open to them, and the children sing, dance, recite the verses of Soviet poets and their own. Owing to the war, some of the poems they choose are perhaps more 'adult' than they would have been in peace-time.

But a screen is set up and, suddenly, up pops Petrushka, our Russian 'Punch,' and a fresh wave of gleeful excitement sweeps the room. It is a really funny, rollicking Petrushka. He canters about on a horse, tries to become a swineherd and the whole children's world roars with infectious laughter. Petrushka and all the other puppets were made by the children of School No. 16 of the Vyborg District. Later, when they recite simple children's jingles, you see once more that no stern reality has killed the splendid children's world of the little Leningrad people, that they are staunch defenders of their own rights to childish joy, play, amusement and song. They sing very well, dance no worse, and when you leave the rooms of the Pioneer Palace still filled with the impressions of this vigorous, vital childhood, the city that is plunged in labour and military cares does not seem so grim to you. The unquenchable spring of childhood is still alive and the first grass is showing on the lawns of the embankment; the fluffy clouds in the blue sky call to mind the pleasant times that have passed and that will again come for Leningrad.

The men are standing in grim silence. One after the other, commanders and men step up and speak about only one thing: vengeance. To-day the oath of vengeance rings through the ranks. Some are holding letters received from home, from liberated territory, others have letters from acquaintances who have escaped from enemy-occupied regions.

At impromptu meetings such as this, documents reporting German atrocities are read out, documents each line of which has been written in blood, letters from enemy-occupied territory, letters of Russian people who have been driven off into bondage, letters describing the destruction of people's homes, trampled under the Fascist jackboot in the Ukraine, in Byelorussia. It is impossible to listen indifferently and calmly. The men who have seen so much frown darkly as they feel a lump rise to their throats. They feel as if they must march out immediately, march out to thrash the German hounds mercilessly, to take merciless revenge, so that the ground is strewn with enemy dead! Here, at the front, the men have seen the bodies of their comrades mutilated by the Nazi cut-throats, have seen the streets of Leningrad drenched in the blood of civilians, have seen the corpses of women and children torn to bits by shells, crushed under ruins, have seen all this only yesterday—there is not much that need be said to them about hate.

This unprecedented war is already in its twenty-third month. There were days of hardship which seemed beyond the power of human endurance. But the Russian, the citizen of Leningrad, has borne

everything, gone through everything—and stood firm. They found the strength at which our successors will marvel when they hear of its heroic struggle. What more is there in store for this proud and unyielding city, what trials are still ahead? The fight is not over, but there is a tremendous difference between what Leningrad was like when it entered the war and what it is like to-day. It was merry and noisy, and has become grim and silent. It was inexperienced though dauntless, while to-day it is wise and strong. It has gone through thick and thin, and the whole fiery ring of the hell of siege. No one can terrify it. It has terrified the enemy, has made him lose confidence, it has forced the vainglorious enemy to feel that it is he who will perish at the gates of the city and disappear ingloriously and without a trace. Leningrad is entering its second wartime spring. Irrespective of what hardships it may bring, it is our spring, and we welcome it; it is ours, the Leningrad spring so dear to us, long awaited, bringing warmth to our fields and our hearts; but the warmth of victory we ourselves must win, and win it we shall.

MAY

THE solemn charm of the spring white nights has come again to Leningrad. From the dense green islands at the mouth of the Neva to the bomb- and shell-scorched groves of the forward position, from the ancient oaks of the Summer Garden, lying in the enchanted silence of the night, to the bushes somewhere on the banks of the river beyond the city, where grenades roar and scouts break into German dug-outs, everywhere is the weird bluish green light of the white nights, everywhere the crimson-streaked dawn plays through the trees and is reflected in the bay, now pale, now flaring up. The houses on the embankment are mirrored in the still waters, and the bridges suspended over the broad smooth surface look airy and unsubstantial. As ever, slim spires rise aloft and the straight streets emphasize the vast area of the city. One can see mile-long stretches of spectrally-light buildings and the hazy wave of green parks. The same night hovers over the peat fields outside the city, over the lakes, over the young pine groves. It looks as if nature has been left to herself once more, for there is not a soul to be seen anywhere, all is quiet, all is deserted.

Seemingly quiet, seemingly deserted! There are no dreamers plunged in peacetime reveries in the parks and on the river banks, but there are others. They are guarding the skies and the land, they are guarding the silent waters.

One wants to sail over the enchanted waters of the bay in this poetic hour. Let us go on a fast naval launch. Naturally one does not

go merely for amusement's sake. There is work to be done, but on the way one first recalls the far-off days of peace. All around are the amazing colours of the tranquil water. Far to the right lies the city, easy to make out through the pure air, and the silhouette of Saint Isaac's above the shore-line. On the left is the clear outline of Kronstadt, masts in the roadstead, funnels and blinking light signals. Directly ahead is the low green strip of the southern bank, only a stone's-throw away.

I remember returning to Leningrad by sea on just such a night. The ship had sailed from London. There were many Englishmen on board, Oxford students for the most part, and a group of American teachers, coming to Russia for the first time. There were other foreigners among the passengers, too. All of them crowded on to the deck, their eyes fixed on the scene unfolding before them. The steamer seemed to be gliding over a multi-coloured crystal in the depths of an enormous shell gleaming with all the lustrous tones of mother-of-pearl, in a mysterious fairy-tale combination of hitherto unseen colours. They changed every minute, and it seemed as if the wealth of colour combination was inexhaustible. Everyone was silent except the secretary of one of the Americans, who was clicking the keys of a typewriter. And yet this sound, so unobtrusive in ordinary times, broke the charmed silence almost deafeningly now. Turning to her secretary, the American said: "Do stop your clattering. How can you! You had better look around you. This is perhaps the loveliest sight you've ever seen in your life."

As one glides over the smooth expanse of the gleaming bay, everything suddenly begins to change ever faster and more sinisterly. Where the city lies a fiery ribbon begins to spread along the whole bank, like the base of a giant triangle. Now from the corners and from the centre, red and gold threads dart aloft into the sky, and beside the bright stars small red-hot meteors appear, crumbling away in the air. A muffled roar comes to one's ears. Leningrad is being raided. The German air pirates are trying to break through to the city. It looks as if lightning were flashing over the low bank that was so quiet, and a heavy, intermittent roar can be heard coming from that direction. A bombardment of the city by land has begun simultaneously with the air raid. Thereupon the bank behind you also awakens, seeming to sigh deeply. Our guns are sending shells over the bay to crush the enemy batteries. At the same time a roaring begins on the Finnish shore, and suddenly one hears a peal of thunder that shakes the earth and the sky. This powerful new voice is the guns of our forts speaking, and it all but stuns the hearer.

The quiet, deserted vista has vanished. A grandiose and gloomy spectacle begins. It looks as if the whole crystal of the sky and the

water is falling in heavy whistling splinters that lash up green foam. Leningrad is thundering, and both shores are thundering. Shells streak through the air, whistling and crackling. Rockets are flying everywhere, white, red, green. Launches dart past, poking their way in and out. Strips of a smoke-curtain creep over the water, through which one can see vessels that look as if they had just appeared in the mist, not having been there before; one simply had not noticed them.

Nothing is now left of the enchanted night. Over the enemy shore a frightful explosion booms, and a monstrous flame shoots up higher than the trees, raging and smoking. Aircraft are flying overhead. It is impossible to distinguish whose they are. Everything booms and roars. Both shores are firing. There is firing near and far, and the most varied tones of the bombardment are carried over the water. Machine-guns are chattering in the air. At the same time flares are dropping in the sky like huge tulips. They light up the bay with a yellowish glare, and more and more of them keep falling. It is hard to make out where they come from. Some of them are ours, some the enemy's—all are muddled together now. One can guess that various operations are taking place, probably having nothing whatever to do with each other. Ships and launches race by, the smoke-curtain disperses in tufts, shells fall, raising heavy water-spouts. Leningrad seems to be lit up by the flames of an invisible illumination.

When one is in the city itself, it is impossible to take in the whole epic grandeur of this daily scene. But here everything is spread out before one. The whole city breathes rage and wrath. The fiery ring of its batteries flares up ever more brightly and frequently, while the threads of tracer shells interweave in the air and the cannonade sounds ever more deafening. From here Leningrad resembles a volcano, belching forth fire. Despite the dismal grandeur of this scene, one feels that a real master painter should be here to convey with his brush all that the eye sees: the colours of the night battle, the water, the land, the sky, the people of Leningrad, its defenders, its staunch sons, the sons of a city that seems to be saluting the future to-day, remembering its glorious past. It is two hundred and forty years old now.

Yes, Leningrad is two hundred and forty years old. It never thought to celebrate its anniversary in this way. But since a period of grim trials has arrived, the city now remembers its whole life, from its first houses, its very first days, so that it may draw new strength from its memories, make sure that in the intervening time, even though it has changed beyond recognition, in its heart of hearts it has remained the same city, a city of warriors, sailors, scientists, and of experts in civil construction and experts in military science.

There is an old belief according to which every city has its good genius, its ministering spirit and founder, living in the hearts of its citizens, in its buildings, in its everyday customs. Leningrad's genius has left a clear and profound imprint on the city, which is as lovely as a fabulous city, yet impregnable as a fortress. One sees all the periods in the history of its life around one. There are the noble outlines of its two-storeyed buildings with their coats-of-arms and inscription: 'Built in 1703,' buildings of the time of Peter the Great. There is the Admiralty, one of the finest buildings in the world, as symbolic in its beauty as a poetical metaphor. There is the Alexander Column, a memorial to undying fame which even the heaviest of enemy bombs has not succeeded in shattering. There is the Academy, which has fostered many famous Russian men of science, the Academy of Art, the Hermitage, great names behind which lie a world of complex and beautiful experiences.

The shores from which the first Russian vessels were launched to-day see our Navy, powerful ships, preparing for new battles. The Triumphal Arch under which the regiments of the old Russian Guard marched, looks down on new Guardsmen of the new, Stalin era as they pass under it. The places where Peter the Great's batteries once stood hear the voice of new, up-to-date artillery, wrought by the hands of Leningrad experts. The salvoes fired from the Peter and Paul Fortress, its first salutes which informed the world of the fact that Russia had taken its place among the nations, its salutes on that October night which told the world of the beginning of a new era in the life of humanity, seem to merge to-day with the volley and roar of the Great Patriotic War. The city is telling its predecessors: I have grown to man's estate, I am formidable, I am strong! I remember all the mandates given me by the Russian people. I am at my post, I am waging battle. I shall not disgrace the memory of Hangö and Poltava, nor the memory of the October Days!

The ancient town is surrounded by a new and splendid Leningrad. Here, too, are great palaces of production, palaces for the workers, palaces for club-houses and palaces for theatres, the Palace of the Soviets, all vast, all expressing magnitude, movement, strength and might.

"St. Petersburg will be a desert!" shouted the frenzied hysterical ones in the days of Peter the Great, and when Peter the Great died, the cowards fled from it, dismayed by the mighty roads opening up before Russia, fled believing that without them the city would vanish. For a short time the city did seem to become quieter and smaller, but nevertheless it grew. No one could hold it back. It rose to its feet again and began to grow and spread incredibly. "St. Petersburg will be a desert!" shouted all the enemies of the Russian people in 1919,

threatening to make short work of the giant city that was so stoutly holding aloft the banner of the October Revolution, the banner of freedom and independence. Its streets lay in frozen silence. Its houses were mildewed with dampness. Its shops and stores were abandoned to the rats that scampered about, their tails slapping the empty shelves. Its dwelling houses were deserted, their ownerless belongings covered with dust. Its factories were at a standstill. The forest seemed to have broken into the city (the fences had all been used for fuel), while grass was growing on the squares. Barricades entangled with barbed wire had risen in the city. But Petrograd emerged from these dark and threatening days even mightier than it had been before. It surpassed all the dreams of its patriots. Rolling up its sleeves in Bolshevik fashion, it set to work, every day growing more and more beautiful. And it earned for itself the great honour and privilege of calling itself Leningrad.

"Leningrad will be a desert," shouted the Nazis, mad dogs prowling round the city, snarling with rage because they could not break into it. They thought they could strangle it with a siege, with the gaunt hand of hunger. They thought to bring it to its knees with bombing and shelling. But as one walks through its streets one feels the grim spirit of the city, the breath of its indomitable genius. It is the spirit of an unyielding city. More than ever, it is confident of its strength. The Leningrad people have always been game and determined. This determination to be the victor is not something lightly attained, but then they are not soft, are not accustomed to a life of ease. They have been steeled by bitter ordeals, they are Bolsheviks, they are Russians. In their most humdrum everyday routine they display their will to victory, their determination to win through all trials. The tread of the enemy has never sounded in the streets of Leningrad. And it never shall! From big to little, all in Leningrad have nothing but profound contempt for all the attempts of the enemy to smash their determination.

The young Leningrad sculptor, Shelyutin, set himself to make his statue of Lieutenant-Colonel Svitenko, of the Air Force, Hero of the Soviet Union and Guardsman, his masterpiece. He spared no effort, and the result was a splendid sculpture. He was killed in the street by a German shell. The master is dead, but his work lives on, the embodiment of his will to live.

An old St. Petersburg man, a skilled worker who had lived through all the rigours of the cruel winter, all the savagery of the Germans, a skilled worker whose age frequently made work hard for him, admitted to me that once he felt really disheartened. So when he got home he sat down in front of a photograph of his dead wife, a strict, stern and just Leningrad woman, and wrote a letter to her, an agitated letter

filled with human emotion, asking her to help him as she had helped him during her lifetime. He read the letter aloud and this communion with his wife's memory and his thinking over past experiences and struggles, all helped to restore his strength of will, and he returned to the bench invigorated and his old self again.

A bomb fell near a maternity home, injuring several of the patients. They were evacuated from the building. One of the stretcher-bearers came up to a woman lying there and asked: "Were you hurt?" In spite of her condition and the bombing, she tried to smile as she answered: "No, I am giving birth." She had not let the ordeal distract her, absorbed as she was in the rhythm of the great instinct of life, determined and calm.

Near the simple memorial, the stone slab on which are only the words: 'Here lies Suvorov,' a group of young officers, dead shots, who have taken their toll of the Germans, are gathered. They have come to pay their tribute of respect to the great General who hated the mortal foe of the Russian people no less than do his descendants.

A steel belt of fortifications girdles the city, of which Kronstadt is the flashing buckle. On the spot where the fortifications of Peter the Great once stood, rise magnificent forts, land cruisers sunk into the soil. They are like battleships in every way. They are manned just like ships, and their guns are as powerful as those on board a battleship. Stalin once visited them. He recaptured them when they fell into enemy hands for a short time. Kirov fortified these strongholds. And to-day, like the whole garrison, they are under the command of that worthy son of Leningrad, Andrei Alexandrovich Zhdanov. These forts resemble not only the ships of the Baltic Fleet but the Leningrad factories, too. Like the giants of industry, they, too, produce death for the enemy; the boom of their guns is well-known to the Germans. Sweeping everything from its path a hurricane of fire whirls over the land, reducing the Nazis to ashes. Leningrad men control the intricate machinery, which is as precise as the mechanism of a watch, as superb as the factories that made it, moving the tremendous weight of the guns with ease. The barrels of the guns look like factory chimneys belching forth flame.

Crossing the bay one comes to Peterhoff. The silence of death hangs over the ruined houses and fields of spring grass. The front passes through this spot. It passes through our hearts. Palaces lie in ruins, charred walls loom where pavilions known the world over once stood. Statues lie in fragments among the smashed trees of the park. A biological institute was once here. Here, too, was a preserve for all kinds of animals that were studied for the benefit of humanity by

the finest scientists of the Pavlov school. And in front of these ruins German beasts in green and black hides crawl on all fours, having forgotten how to walk upright. The Russian people are exterminating these savage brutes, for they must not be spared. Here Sniper Riznichenko has already done for something over two hundred of them. From his position he can see the house in which he lived in peace with his family until the Nazi beasts came prowling around. First-Lieutenant Melentyev, and Privates Lebedev, Troshichev and Kuzavanov, artists with the Forces, are making sketches of what remains of the famous buildings. There is little left.

If everyone could see what the Germans have done to world-famous monuments and works of art, a shudder would run through the world. The Red Army men here burn with hatred at what they see with their own eyes. Germans go out to catch fish off the shore of the bay, but they will catch nothing. The snipers' shots crack out and the cannibals who wanted fresh fish tumble out of their boats into the water. They bring their womenfolk here, to have a feast. In white suits and gaudy frocks they gather around delicacies and wines which they have stolen from all Europe. An artillery barrage covers them with ruthless accuracy. Those who remain alive crawl out from under the ruins into the bushes, the memory of this banquet engraved in their minds for all time. It is not yours to feast and revel, curs that you are!

The time will come when we shall drive the Hitlerites out of our Leningrad suburbs, baring our heads before the victims of their atrocities, before the sacred ruins, the graves of civilians who lived here and fell at the hands of these murderers. All that can be restored we shall restore, and we shall force the plunderers to return all that they have stolen, force them to weep tears of blood.

To-day, both in the city and at the front, a watchful silence prevails. The city is prepared and the front is prepared to ward off any attack. Leningrad breathes fire at the enemy. It stands unmoving, but the day will come when it will march forward, and in such a way that the German fortifications, their total reserves, the panzers and guns will be unable to stop it. Let the Germans remember that they have been befouling our territory round Leningrad for two years now. Retribution will be terrible.

Leningrad has stood for two hundred and forty years. For two hundred and forty years stood the little towns of Pushkino, Gatchina, Peterhoff and Pavlovsk, now smashed by the Nazis into a heap of ruins. Seven hundred years ago this land was Russian soil, and such it will remain for all time. Leningrad will stride forth in its two hundred

and forty-first year, which will be a year of a new fame for it. In the twenty-sixth year of the new, Soviet era, it will stride forth confidently, tearing the bonds of the blockade to shreds and utterly wiping out the forces of darkness. It will stride forth to the future, to a victory that is decisive and final, just as its glorious brother-in-arms, Stalingrad, has done.

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